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KASHMIR IN TRANSITION  
1885-1893





# KASHMIR IN TRANSITION

## 1885-1893

58746

DILIP KUMAR GHOSE

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CALCUTTA  
THE WORLD PRESS PRIVATE LTD.  
1975

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*First Published : July 1975*

Published by S. Bhattacharjee for the World Press Private Ltd.,  
37A College Street, Calcutta-700012 and Printed by Chanchal Bhowal  
at Prestige Printers, 2 Ramnath Biswas Lane, Calcutta-700009.

TO THE MEMORY OF  
MY MOTHER



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present work is based on my doctoral dissertation, submitted to the University of London in 1963. The study was made possible by the award of a Commonwealth Scholarship by the Government of India. I am indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Kenneth Ballhatchet, now Professor of South Asian History at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, for the guidance and encouragement I received from him.

The publication of this work was financially supported by the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi. The responsibility for the facts stated, opinions expressed, or conclusions reached, is entirely mine and the Indian Council of Historical Research accepts no responsibility for them.

My student, Dr. Phanindranath Banerji of the Department of History, Seth Anandram Jaipuria College, Calcutta, helped me to prepare the index.

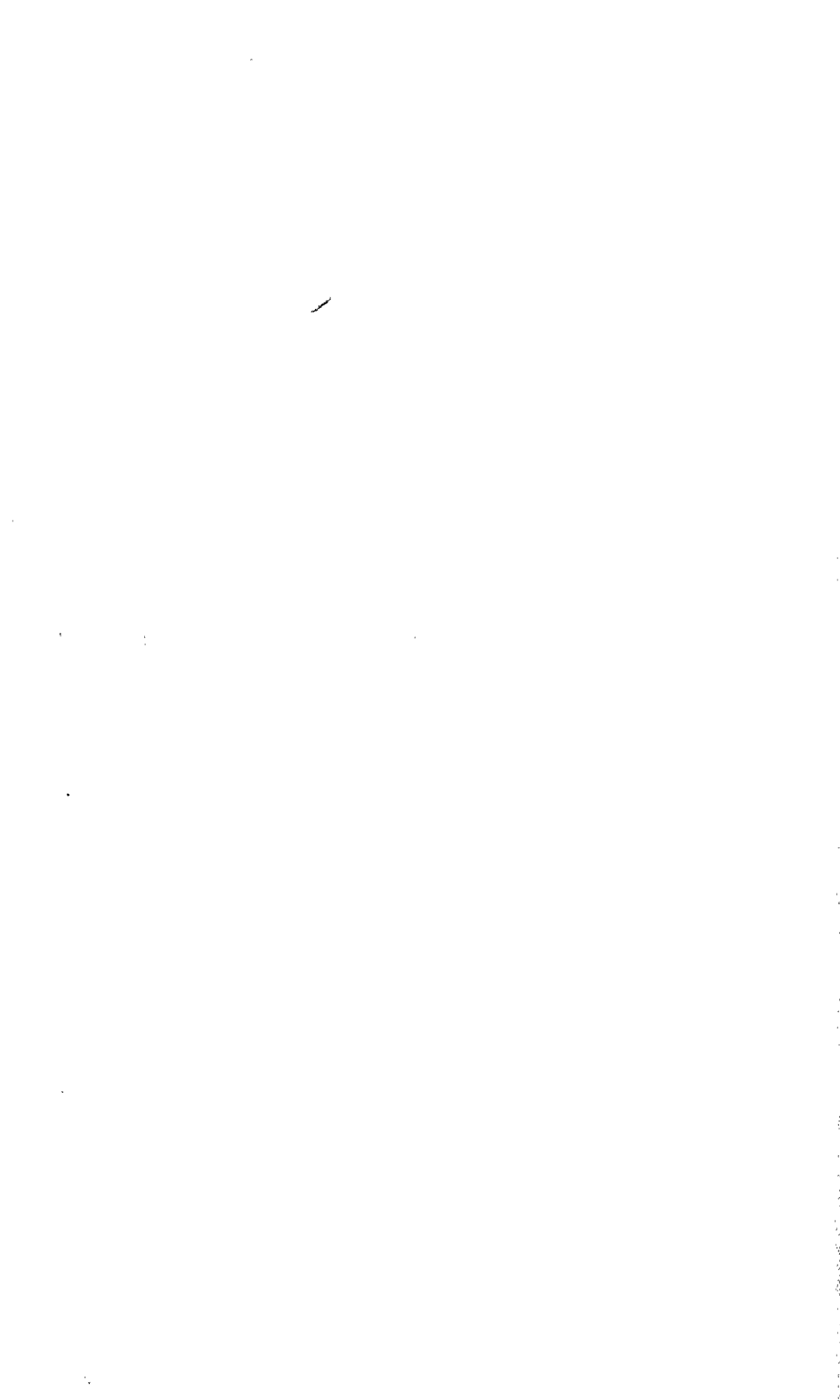
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## ABBREVIATIONS

|           |                                                                     |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Add. Mss. | Additional Manuscripts                                              |
| CIPD      | Collections to India Political Despatches                           |
| Cons.     | Consultation                                                        |
| ESLI      | Enclosures to Secret Letters received from India                    |
| FO        | Foreign Office                                                      |
| GI        | Government of India                                                 |
| IFP       | India Foreign Proceedings                                           |
| IO        | India Office                                                        |
| IPFP      | India Political and Foreign Proceedings                             |
| IPWP      | India Public Works Proceedings                                      |
| KW        | Keep-withs                                                          |
| MINWF     | Memorandum of Information regarding the<br>North-West Frontier      |
| NAI/FDP   | Foreign Department Proceedings in the National<br>Archives of India |
| PAR       | Punjab Administration Reports                                       |
| PCD       | Peshawar Confidential Diary                                         |
| PFP       | Punjab Foreign Proceedings                                          |
| PMC       | Political and Miscellaneous Correspondence                          |
| PP        | Parliamentary Papers                                                |
| PRGS      | Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society                       |
| PSDI      | Political and Secret Despatches to India                            |
| PSDOC     | Political and Secret Demi-Official Correspondence                   |
| PSHC      | Political and Secret Home Correspondence                            |
| PSLEI     | Political and Secret Letters and Enclosures<br>from India           |
| PSM       | Political and Secret Memoranda                                      |
| Sec.      | Secret                                                              |
| SLEI      | Secret Letters and Enclosures from India                            |
| SPLBI     | Secret and Political Letters from Bengal and<br>India               |
| SS        | Secretary of State for India                                        |
| WO        | War Office                                                          |





## INTRODUCTION

The period between 1885 and 1893 was one of transition in the history of Kashmir. Hitherto recognised as a quasi-independent state, Kashmir was reduced during this period to the position of the other feudatory states of India, and was brought completely within the Indian political system. This change was introduced in answer to a question that had been raised since practically the creation of the state in 1846 : what was to be the position of Kashmir in relation to the British Empire in India ?

The transformation began with the appointment in 1885 of a British Resident at the court of the Kashmir Maharaja. It was completed in 1893 when an understanding was reached between Britain and Russia as to the demarcation of the Pamir boundaries. A dual concept was at work behind this change: political control was to be imposed upon the Kashmir Darbar, and the introduction of a scheme of economic, social, administrative and military reforms fully ensured. Indeed, as an integral part of the Indian Empire, the state then stood in great need of such reforms.

All this was demanded by a gradual deterioration of the Kashmir administration during the reign of Ranbir Singh, due particularly to the protracted illness of the Maharaja.<sup>1</sup> Ranbir was the son and successor of Gulab Singh of the Lahore Darbar whom the British Government had set up as the ruler of the newly created State of Jammu and Kashmir in 1846. After the death of Ranbir Singh, the need was felt for a firmer control over the Maharaja's Government, especially in view of the rapid march of events in the north-west frontier of India. Russia's advance towards that frontier had been accelerated by the fall of Samarkand in 1868. From that time till the conquest of Merv in 1884 her advance had been stealthy but continuous. Reports were even received of Russian activities upon the Pamirs.<sup>2</sup> The situation was aggravated by Afghan intrigues in Swat, Bajaur and Dir, and it was rumoured that the Amir even intended to

<sup>1</sup> Henvey's Report, 15 May 1880, encl. 2 in GI to SS, 7 April 1884, PSLEI/40, p. 27 ; Sufi, G.M.D. *Kashir* (Lahore 1949), pp. 796-802.

<sup>2</sup> Encl. in FO to IO, 1 Oct. 1883, PSHC/59, p. 363.

extend his influence up to Gilgit.<sup>3</sup> All this made it imperative that Kashmir, an important frontier state, could not be left alone at the risk of the security of the Indian Empire.

It is interesting to note that though the change in the Kashmir administration was introduced in 1885 by Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy of India from 1884 to 1888, it was not originally conceived by him, but was the result of mature consideration by successive Governors-General since practically the treaty of Amritsar, 1846. There was likewise no deliberate plan to introduce the change in 1885, which happened to be a very important year in the history of Indian defence. It was just a coincidence of history that the death of Ranbir Singh, which was the signal for the appointment of a British Resident in Kashmir, occurred in the same year as that of the Panjdeh crisis.<sup>4</sup> This event was the prelude to a big change in the system of India's defence, and was directly responsible for the reorganisation of the Native States armies. The process of change continued till it was completed in 1893. Dufferin and his successor, Lansdowne, shared the responsibility for bringing about this change which is said to have ushered in a new era for the State of Kashmir.<sup>5</sup>

If the local aspect of the Kashmir problem tended towards a solution, from the British point of view, with the establishment of complete political control over the administration of the state in 1889, the imperial aspect, i.e. the defence of the Kashmir frontiers against a possible encroachment by Russia, continued to be a matter for concern till the Durand Mission was sent to Kabul and Sir Mortimer, Lansdowne's Foreign Secretary, was able to come to a satisfactory agreement with Abdur Rahman, the Amir of Afghanistan, with regard to the north-west frontiers of India. That agreement has generally been regarded as important on the ground that it settled the frontier issues between Afghanistan and India. But Durand's work at Kabul was equally important in that it provided the basis for the settlement of the northern frontiers with Russia. If, indeed, the Durand Agree-

<sup>3</sup> Encl. 9 in GI to SS, 1 Aug. 1884, PSLEI/41, p. 597.

<sup>4</sup> Panjdeh was a territory upon the northern frontiers of Afghanistan, to which her title was rather dubious. Nevertheless, its occupation by Russia on 30 March 1885 created tension and a war between England and Russia on the issue of its ownership came within the range of possibilities. Ghose, D. K. *England and Afghanistan* (Calcutta 1960), Chap. VI.

<sup>5</sup> Sufi, G. M. D. *op. cit.*, p. 815.

ment was the high watermark of Lansdowne's "forward frontier policy",<sup>6</sup> it marked the climax of his Kashmir policy as well.

This forms the central theme of the present work which has been based on all available source material, both published and unpublished, including many demi-official papers from the Indian Archives at New Delhi which were not available in the British Record Offices. Geographically, the present work deals with the State of Jammu and Kashmir with its dependencies, and the numerous tribal states which lay to the south of the great mountain barrier formed by the Hindu Kush, the Pamirs and the Karakoram ranges—"all geologically one".<sup>7</sup> The area under discussion consisted of diverse tribal organisations, often at war with each other and a source of trouble to the Kashmir Darbar. To the north-west of Gulab Singh's dependencies of Ladakh and Baltistan there lay, south of the Pamirs, a number of non-Pathan tribal territories stretching to the south-west as far as Dir, Swat and Bajaur which were generally known as Dardistan. The most northerly of these were the small states of Hunza and Nagar of which the former was strategically very important because it was traversed by a number of passes cutting across the mountain barrier of the north. No less important than Hunza was the State of Chitral to the west which included Yasin and was accessible without difficulty from the side of the Oxus ; it therefore held a very important position in the defence scheme of the northern frontiers of Kashmir.<sup>8</sup> South-east of Chitral were the trans-Indus states of Gor, Chilas, Darel and Tangir. Of these Chilas was by far the biggest, and its inhabitants were perhaps the most fanatical of the Dard tribes.<sup>9</sup> Strategically, it was of considerable importance, as it flanked the Kashmir route to Gilgit, the defensive nucleus of Dardistan, and also commanded a direct route to that place from British territory.

A word on the dependencies of the Kashmir state is also necessary to explain the scope of the present work. By 1819

<sup>6</sup> Durand to Lansdowne, 10 Nov. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/VII(j), p. 450.

<sup>7</sup> Douglas, W. O. *Beyond the High Himalayas* (London 1953), p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Memo. on Chitral by A. N. Wallaston, 8 Oct. 1878, PSM/A 18 ; Young-husband's Report on the Hindu Kush Passes, Feb. 1894, PSM/A95.

<sup>9</sup> Encl. 1 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB (vi), pp. 917-24 ; vide also Bamzai, P. N. K. *The History of Kashmir* (Delhi 1962), p. 610.

both Jammu and Kashmir had been annexed to his kingdom by Ranjit Singh, the ruler of the Punjab. Next year, Ranjit gave away Jammu to Gulab Singh, a Dogra adventurer, as a reward for his faithful services to the Lahore Darbar. Kashmir proper was ruled by a succession of governors till 1841, when Gulab Singh was called upon to suppress a rebellion in the Kashmir territory; and since then he became virtually the master of the entire valley. In the following years began the expansion of the Kashmir territories to the north. By 1860 Ladakh, Baltistan and Gilgit fell to the Dogras. Three years later Yasin was occupied with great difficulty but was soon lost to Chitral. Not long after, Ghazan Khan of Hunza offered his allegiance to the Darbar, though continuing to send a small tribute to the Chinese Emperor. During these years some of the Indus Valley tribes were also attacked by Kashmir troops, and Chilas and Darel were compelled to pay tribute.<sup>10</sup> Several years later, in 1878, Chitral accepted the suzerainty of the Kashmir Darbar.<sup>11</sup> Even so, the influence of the ruler of Kashmir over his dependencies was more nominal than real. The two most important tributaries, Chitral and Hunza, ruled independently for all practical purposes. Hunza did not even hesitate to trouble the Darbar whenever necessary. In fact, the northern frontiers of Kashmir were in a continuous state of flux, and whenever suitable opportunities occurred, the authority of the Darbar was set at defiance by its feudatories. As a result, the Kashmir policy of the Government of India included the task of consolidating British influence along the northern frontiers of the state, and that in the interests not merely of the Maharaja, but also of the Indian Empire.

<sup>10</sup> Panikkar, K. M. *Gulab Singh*, (London 1953), pp. 141-48; Sufi, G. M.D. *op. cit.*, p. 495; Bamzai, P. N. K. *op. cit.*, pp. 609-10, and 620-21.

<sup>11</sup> Aitchison, C. U. *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads* (Calcutta 1929-33), vol. XI, p. 427.

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 Price. 35-00*



## CHAPTER I

# THE KASHMIR RESIDENCY QUESTION 1846-84

At the time of the First Sikh War the provinces which constituted the State of Kashmir had come, more or less, under the rulers of the Lahore State and one of its principal leaders, Raja Gulab Singh. The battle of Sobraon was followed by the British occupation of Lahore and the submission of the Sikhs to the British army. On the part of the Lahore Darbar, Gulab Singh was deputed to treat for peace, and the result was the first treaty of Lahore, signed on 9 March 1846.<sup>1</sup> By the twelfth article of this treaty provision was made for the creation of a state at Jammu which was also to include "other territories in the hills". The new state was set up to act as a counterpoise to the Sikh State at Lahore, and the Company's Government decided to confer it on Gulab Singh by a separate treaty which was concluded at Amritsar on 16 March 1846.<sup>2</sup>

By that treaty the British-Indian Government transferred "for ever in independent possession to Maharaja Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body, all the hilly or mountainous country with its dependencies situated to the eastward of the River Indus and the westward of the River Ravi". In consideration of this transfer of territory, the Maharaja agreed to pay the British Government a sum of 75 lakhs of rupees and remain faithful to them in all circumstances. Especially by the tenth and last article of the treaty, Gulab Singh acknowledged the supremacy of the British Government and, in token of such supremacy, agreed to present them annually with one horse, twelve shawl goats, and three pairs of Kashmiri shawls.

The State of Jammu and Kashmir, a territory of about 80,000 square miles, was thus brought into being. Admittedly,

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<sup>1</sup> Aitchison, C.U. *op. cit.*, Vol.I, pp.50-54.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol.XII, pp.21-22.



the state was created in the interest of frontier defence<sup>3</sup>—a policy which doubtless postulated that the state should be sufficiently strong for such a role, and that the British-Indian Government should have an adequate control over its affairs. But no such provision was included in the treaty of Amritsar, and this led historians like K. M. Panikkar to emphasise the independent status of the Kashmir Maharaja. Panikkar's argument to support his contention was that "no control was exercised by the British Government in the administration (of the State), and no Resident was appointed".<sup>4</sup> Whenever, in fact, the question of appointing a Resident in Kashmir was raised by the Indian Government, the Maharaja objected to it on the ground that his independent status was guaranteed by the first article of the treaty of Amritsar.

Such a claim, however, rested upon very doubtful assumptions. For one thing, whatever meaning may be attributed to the phrase "independent possession" in the first article of the treaty, Gulab Singh's independence was certainly qualified by the definite assertion of British supremacy in the last article. Besides, the ruler of Kashmir engaged himself to send to the British Government an annual gift which, however small, was nevertheless a symbol of "allegiance and subordination".<sup>5</sup> At any rate, a literal interpretation of the treaty of Amritsar was never intended by its authors ; at least Hardinge, the Governor-General of India, wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors three days after the treaty had been signed : "The Maharaja is declared by the Treaty *independent of the Lahore State*<sup>6</sup>, and under the protection of the British Government".<sup>7</sup>

As a matter of fact, any literal interpretation of the treaty of Amritsar would have precluded Gulab Singh from acquiring territories in Gilgit, not to speak of those of Ladakh and

---

<sup>3</sup> GG to Secret Committee, 19 March 1846, SPLBI/XIII. The State was made over to Gulab Singh in the hope that he would resist any attempt by a "Muhammadian power to establish an independent State on this side of the Indus," and also act as a "counterpoise against the power of the Sikh prince".

<sup>4</sup> Panikkar, K. M. *op. cit.*, p.126.

<sup>5</sup> Lee-Warner, W. *The Native States of India*, (London 1910), p.322.

<sup>6</sup> Italics mine.

<sup>7</sup> SPLBI/XIII.

Baltistan. The first article of the treaty had only guaranteed to the Maharaja territories to the east of the Indus, while the fourth article forbade him from extending his boundaries without the consent of the British Government. In fact, "the hill country was made over" to Gulab Singh "with all its duties and obligations",<sup>8</sup> and it was stipulated that the Maharaja should act up to his engagements consistently with the maintenance of British paramountcy "over the Raja and the country".<sup>9</sup>

But apart from these general stipulations, the appointment of a Resident in Kashmir was also discussed as a possible consequence of Gulab Singh's neglect or failure to carry out reforms. Scarcely was the ink on the treaty of Amritsar dry than direct interference into the affairs of the state had to be resorted to. Henry Lawrence<sup>10</sup> heard complaints from the Jagirdars and other grantees that the Maharaja was resuming their ancient possessions.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, Lt. R. G. Taylor, Assistant to the British Resident at Lahore, was sent to Kashmir to enquire into the whole system of administration and draw up a programme of reform. This he did, and the Maharaja agreed to carry out the measures recommended. But Lawrence soon had occasion to doubt whether the Maharaja was earnest in his protestations, and capable of fulfilling his promises. So he suggested that it might be useful to depute a respectable native agent to Kashmir who could keep the government informed "without being an incubus on the local authorities".<sup>12</sup>

Not that Gulab Singh was really averse to reforms. Lawrence, too, was never convinced that the Maharaja was absolutely incorrigible. Even so, whenever he heard reports of misgovernment or oppression in Kashmir, he impressed upon the Maharaja—irrespective of whether he believed in the reports or not—that the essential condition of his 'independence' was his capacity to govern his subjects with justice and equanimity, and

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<sup>8</sup> Lawrence to Gulab Singh, 6 Nov. 1846, ESLI/108.

<sup>9</sup> Hardinge to the Court of Directors, 4 March 1846, SPLBI/XIII.

<sup>10</sup> Resident as well as Agent to the Governor-General for the North-West Frontier.

<sup>11</sup> Panikkar, K. M. *op.cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>12</sup> Lawrence to Currie, 12 Nov. 1846, ESLI/108.

his ability to ameliorate their conditions ; that if he should fail to fulfil the expectations of the British Government, "some other arrangement will be made for the protection of the hill people".<sup>13</sup> The same sentiment was echoed by Henry Hardinge. "In no case will the British Government be the blind instrument of a ruler's injustice towards his people"—was his parting address to Maharaja Gulab Singh ; this was followed by a solemn assertion that unless "the evil of which the British Government may have a just cause to complain be not corrected, a system of direct interference must be resorted to".<sup>14</sup>

All this was capped by a clear statement of British policy by Sir Henry Lawrence in one of his private letters to H. M. Elliot who succeeded Frederick Currie as Secretary to the Government of India. After repeating his impression that the reports of misgovernment by the Maharaja were exaggerated, Lawrence observed "that early next season one or two officers will go and thoroughly examine the valley, and on their report will depend whether the Maharaja is to be saddled with a permanent Resident or remain independent". This was the strongest argument he could use "short of saying we will take the country."<sup>15</sup>

The question of appointing a Resident in Kashmir was again raised in 1851. Owing to the natural attractions of Kashmir as a field of sport and holiday resort the number of British visitors to the Valley had been greatly increasing every year. The need was therefore felt for an officer to look after their interests. The suggestion came from Henry Lawrence, and Lord Dalhousie, then the Governor-General of India, was eager to consider the appointment of a regular British agent.<sup>16</sup> The Maharaja's objection to such an arrangement was well apprehended, and eventually an agreement was come to that a British officer would reside in the valley only during the summer months. Personally, Lord Dalhousie was unwilling to assent to the appointment of a

<sup>13</sup> Lawrence to Gulab Singh, 29 Nov. 1847, ESLI/113.

<sup>14</sup> *Kharita* to Gulab Singh, 7 January 1848, *vide* Hardinge's Minute, 1 January 1848, ESLI/113.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted in a Memo. n. d., encl. 3 in GI to SS, 7 April 1884, PSLEI/40, pp. 81-85.

<sup>16</sup> Dalhousie to Sir H. Lawrence, 8 July 1851, Dalhousie Papers/Section 6 No. 98.

civil officer every year, and agreed to the arrangement only as a temporary expedient.<sup>17</sup> The officer thus appointed was authorised to arbitrate in any dispute between the authorities of the country and the British visitors, and to take cognisance of any oppression or irregularities which could be charged against them.<sup>18</sup>

During the next two decades the Residency question was kept alive not merely by the Anglo-Indian Press, but also by interested individuals and officials of the Punjab Government. The transfer—or sale, as it was often called—of Kashmir to Gulab Singh was considered a mistake<sup>19</sup>, and there were men who even hoped that the public might be induced to look with favour upon the permanent acquisition of Kashmir. It was argued that Kashmir was actually a part of the Punjab and a place of great importance to the security of the north-western frontier of India. Possessed of a European climate, it would serve at once as a fortress, a depot and a sanatorium, and with a good road through the Baramula Pass, “a British force in the highest state of health and appointment could, in a very few days, be marched thence to deploy along the banks of the Indus, or meet any invader in the plains of Afghanistan”.<sup>20</sup>

But political expediency was not the only consideration that weighed against the continued existence of Kashmir as an ‘independent’ state. Charges of oppression and tyranny—reminiscent of Lord Dalhousie’s indictment that “the fertile and unhappy province of Cashmere.....we unwittingly handed over to a chief who has proved himself a veritable tyrant”<sup>21</sup>—were brought up against the Maharaja. It was urged that a policy which was suited to the complete growth of the Empire, and not the prevailing attitude of non-interference with Native States, should be adopted, so that “the Queen’s supremacy which was

<sup>17</sup> Dalhousie to Sir H. Lawrence, 5 Jan. 1852, *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> IPFP/Range 200, Vol. X, Cons.82; Henry Lawrence to Dalhousie, Dec.20, 1851, Dalhousie Papers/Section 6, No.71.

<sup>19</sup> *Friend of India*, 31 Dec. 1863, p.1472; Nov.24, 1864, p.1323.

<sup>20</sup> PRGS, 1859-60, IV, pp.31-32.

<sup>21</sup> Minute by Dalhousie, 28 February 1856, Dalhousie Papers/Section 6, No.212; also Temple Collection/B.42.

unquestioned in fact could as well be recognised in form by the Kashmir Prince."<sup>22</sup>

Another very common complaint against the Kashmir chief was his acquisition of Gilgit and Yasin in violation of the treaty of 1846.<sup>23</sup> The first article of that treaty, it was argued, had only granted him territories to the east of the Indus while the fourth article precluded him from acquiring new territories without the consent of the British authorities.<sup>24</sup> The cry was raised that such proceedings of the Maharaja should be stopped, and the feudatory duties, which the past indifference of the Government of India had allowed him to ignore, should now be exacted from him. Imperatively, the way to do that was to appoint "a Political Resident with full powers" at the Kashmir Darbar, and fix the Maharaja's boundaries at the Indus.<sup>25</sup>

This line of argument, however, did not go altogether unchallenged. Criticising one Mr. Thorp's statement in the *Friend of India*<sup>26</sup> that he was ill-treated by the Kashmir Government, the *Englishman* observed that nothing could exceed the kindness and hospitality the Maharaja extended to foreign visitors and therefore "the nonsensical cry about oppression should cease".<sup>27</sup> Even the Governor-General, Lord Lawrence, though considerably annoyed by adverse Press criticisms, refused to take them seriously.<sup>28</sup> He had "no apprehensions" about Russian advance in Central Asia, and no wish to do anything that could alienate Maharaja Ranbir Singh. Towards the close

<sup>22</sup> *Friend of India*, Nov. 24, 1864, p.1322; Thorp, R., *Kashmir Misgovernment*, (London 1870); *Friend of India*, 23 Nov. 1865, p.1367.

<sup>23</sup> *Friend of India*, 31 Dec.1863, p. 1482; *Pioneer*, May 9, 1870, p.3.

<sup>24</sup> As already discussed, a literal interpretation of the treaty was hardly ever intended, and as such, this argument does not seem to conform to the reality of the situation. On the contrary, in 1848, Sir John Lawrence, then officiating as Resident and Agent to the Governor-General at Lahore, actually urged the Maharaja to strengthen the Gilgit garrison, and appoint an able commander there. Much later, in 1870, Gilgit was officially stated to have been included within the territories formally ceded to the Maharaja by the treaty of Amritsar, India to Punjab, 16 May 1870, encl. 6 in Mayo to Argyll, 17 May 1870, SLEI/6,p.379.

<sup>25</sup> *Pioneer*, May 9, 1870, p.3.

<sup>26</sup> Feb.6, 1868, p.155.

<sup>27</sup> Feb.12, 1868, p.2.

<sup>28</sup> Lawrence to Wood, 21 October 1865, Wood Papers/Box 7B.

of 1867, Charles Aitchison, the Commissioner of Lahore, urged the Government of India to establish a direct control over the diplomatic intercourse of the Maharaja. But Lawrence argued that it would not be expedient, still less necessary, to insist on such a course ; "a requisition of the kind would be distasteful to the Maharaja, and any attempt to enforce it would be found nugatory".<sup>29</sup> In fact, on representation from Ranbir Singh he even suggested the withdrawal of the British agent from Ladakh.<sup>30</sup> He gratefully remembered the loyal services of that feudatory throughout the Indian Mutiny and the subsequent occurrences on the north-west frontier ; so he was unwilling to lose the advantage of having between India and Central Asia at least one friendly ruler, "thoroughly well disposed to British ascendancy and influence".<sup>31</sup>

Lord Mayo, the next Governor-General, was in complete agreement with Lawrence that the Press criticisms of the Maharaja's activities around Gilgit were considerably exaggerated and no less embarrassing. But, in spite of his faith in peace and non-interference, he fully shared the opinion of the Punjab authorities that the duty of protecting the Kashmir State from external enemies required a "constant watchfulness over all (its) diplomatic proceedings".<sup>32</sup> At a private interview with the Maharaja at Sialkot in 1870, Mayo made it clear that whatever might have been the policy of the Indian Government in the past, they were now determined to control his trans-frontier activities.<sup>33</sup> But in respect of the internal administration of the country, Mayo was not prepared to do or suggest anything that would lower the Maharaja's dignity or weaken his authority. Even so, his successor, Lord Northbrook, asserted in later years that if Mayo had lived he would certainly have pressed a Resident

<sup>29</sup> Encls. in Pol. letter No. 15 dated 28 January 1868, CIPD/96, No.63.

<sup>30</sup> Lawrence to Northcote, 29 Oct. 1868, and 9 Nov.1868, John Lawrence Papers/33, Nos. 75 and 78. The British Agency was established by Lawrence himself for political and commercial purposes.

<sup>31</sup> India to Punjab, 9 Nov.1868, CIPD/110, No. 255.

The question of withdrawal was, however, not pressed by the Government of India owing to the serious opposition of the Punjab officials.

<sup>32</sup> Mayo to Argyll, 16 May 1870, Mayo Papers/39, No.126; GI to SS, 17 May 1870, and enclosures, SLEI/6.

<sup>33</sup> Memo. by C.U. Aitchison, 15 May 1870, Argyll Papers/Reel 312, p.392.

Political Officer upon the ruler of Kashmir.<sup>34</sup> But there is nothing on record either in Northbrook's correspondence or in Mayo's official and private papers that would justify this assertion. On the contrary, Mayo was very sensitive to the Maharaja's susceptibilities, and did his best to "disabuse his suspicions" about British interference in his country.<sup>35</sup> In fact, Mayo believed that the ruler of Kashmir was the most loyal and devoted feudatory of the Indian Government, and that if his personal confidence could be secured, "Cashmere will gradually be unfolded to the benefit principally of herself, but also of India".<sup>36</sup>

It was actually Lord Northbrook who officially revived the Residency question when he became the Viceroy of India. Early in February 1873, R. H. Davies, the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, had sent the Viceroy a communication that smacked of Kashmiri intrigues with Russia.<sup>37</sup> Northbrook of course "considered it unsatisfactory", but the report nevertheless persuaded him to consider the question of appointing a permanent Resident in Kashmir. Though not disposed to exaggerate the importance of the reported intrigues of the Maharaja, the Viceroy was yet aware of the larger issues involved in the Russian advance in Central Asia. In the spring of 1873 Khiva fell to the Czar, and this new Russian acquisition created all sorts of rumour in British India. Besides, the closer relations which were likely to be established with Yarkand as a result of a recent commercial mission to the Atalik Ghazi led Northbrook to consider the advisability of a British Resident in Kashmir.<sup>38</sup>

The result was that without even waiting for the sanction of the Home authorities, he informed the Government of the Punjab that a Resident, subordinate to the Lieutenant Governor, would hereafter conduct the political relations of the Government of

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<sup>34</sup> Viceroy to SS, 13 Nov. 1873, SLEI/15, p. 1039.

<sup>35</sup> Mayo to Durand, 27 July 1870, Mayo Papers/40, No. 215.

<sup>36</sup> GI to SS, 17 May 1870, SLEI/6; Mayo to Durand, 27 July 1870, Mayo Papers/40, No. 215. Durand too had full confidence in Maharaja's loyalty. Durand to Mayo, 31 July 1870, Mayo Papers/52.

<sup>37</sup> Davies to Northbrook, 6 Feb. 1873, Argyll Papers Reel 317.

<sup>38</sup> India to Punjab, 12 Sept. 1873, encl. 3 in GI to SS, 15 Sept. 1873, SLEI/15, p. 1048.

India with the Kashmir Darbar. Davies was asked to communicate to the Maharaja that the change in the political arrangements was being contemplated

“entirely for reasons relating to the external relations of British India, and that the Viceroy has no intention of interfering more than heretofore in the internal affairs of Cashmere”.<sup>39</sup>

As anticipated, Ranbir Singh disliked the proposal very much and earnestly protested against it. Whether that alone would have stopped Northbrook from pressing a Resident upon the Maharaja is doubtful, but serious differences of opinion cropped up in the India Council. The Duke of Argyll, the Secretary of State for India, referred the question to the Political Committee where it was hotly debated. If Frere,<sup>40</sup> Perry,<sup>41</sup> and Rawlinson<sup>42</sup> supported the Viceroy's case, Montgomery,<sup>43</sup> Currie<sup>44</sup> and Clerk<sup>45</sup> strongly protested against it and pointed out the impropriety and impolicy of the proposed measure. It was argued that the appointment of a Resident in Kashmir was never contemplated when the treaty of 1846 was concluded ; it could only be justified as a “penal measure” in consequence of the Maharaja's disloyalty to the British Government, or “as a political arrangement arising out of absolute necessity for the preservation of our position on that frontier”.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Sir Bartle Frere: Famous administrator; Governor of Bombay, 1862-67; Member of the India Council from 1867.

<sup>41</sup> Sir Thomas Erskine Perry: Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Bombay, retired 1852; M.P., Devonport, 1854-59; Member of the India Council from 1859.

<sup>42</sup> Sir Henry Rawlinson: Famous British-Indian Official who won distinction for his services in Persia and the Afghan War of 1842; M.P. for sometime; Member, India Council from 1868.

<sup>43</sup> Sir Robert Montgomery: Lt. Governor, Punjab, 1859-65; Member, India Council from 1868.

<sup>44</sup> Sir Frederick Currie; Foreign Secretary, Govt. of India, 1842-49; Member, Supreme Council, 1849-53; Chairman of the E.I.Co., 1857; Vice-President, India Council.

<sup>45</sup> Sir George Clerk: Governor of Bombay, 1846-48 & 1860-62; Permanent Under-Secretary of State for India, 1858; Member, India Council from 1863. For the Minutes and Notes of these officials, SLEI/15, p.1039.

<sup>46</sup> Currie's Note, 31 Oct.1873, SLEI/15, p. 1039.



Sir Frederick Currie even made a striking disclosure that at the time of the treaty of Amritsar a promise had been made to the Maharaja

“that as long as His Highness remained faithful to the conditions of the treaty and loyal to the British Government, no interference with his Government would be attempted....., and no Resident established at his capital”.<sup>47</sup>

This was determined, as Currie asserted, by Lord Hardinge after full consideration of this point with him and Lord Lawrence ; and Northbrook was urged to refer for his information to Lord Hardinge's letters to the Secret Committee of 19 February and 19 March 1846.<sup>48</sup> Argyll agreed with Currie that the appointment of a Resident was “virtually a penal measure”, and expressed his doubts as to the wisdom of adopting such a course, except on the ground of treachery on the part of the Maharaja.<sup>49</sup>

The refusal of the Home Government to sanction his plan naturally exasperated the Viceroy. He ransacked the files of the Foreign Department to find out Hardinge's letters in question, but failed to trace in them any promise said to have been made to the Maharaja.<sup>50</sup> As a matter of fact, in none of these letters was there any clear indication of the supposed promise given to Ranbir Singh.<sup>51</sup> Northbrook therefore refused to take any official cognizance of Frederick Currie's statement which, in fact, had never been officially communicated to the Indian Government. He complained in a letter to Lord Salisbury, the Secretary of State for India :

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<sup>47</sup> Currie to Argyll, 27 Nov. 1873, encl. in Argyll to Northbrook 28 Nov. 1873, Northbrook Papers/9, pp.103-05.

<sup>48</sup> These letters are in SPLBI/XIII.

<sup>49</sup> Argyll to Northbrook, 28 Nov. 1873, Northbrook Papers/9, pp.103-04.

<sup>50</sup> Northbrook to Salisbury, 27 March 1874, Northbrook Papers/11, pp. 12-18.

<sup>51</sup> The second of these letters however refers to a Notification issued by Hardinge for general information regarding Gulab Singh's accession to power. Prof. H.H. Dodwell, *Cambridge History of India*, Vol.VI, (Cambridge, 1932), thinks that this promise might have been made; pp.495-96.

"Faith is to be kept under all circumstances, but is it to be assumed in future that the appointment of a Resident at Kashmir, which probably must come sooner or later, is to imply a belief on our part of disloyalty of the Maharaja ?"<sup>52</sup>

The suspicions as to Kashmiri intrigues with Russia had in the meantime completely broken down. In his communication to Ranbir Singh, Northbrook therefore assumed a different attitude and tried to impress upon him that the appointment of a Resident was an honour rather than a punishment. He urged Rawlinson to see to it that nothing was done by the Home Government against the right of appointing a permanent Resident at the court of the Kashmir Maharaja, because he was confident that the matter would be "raised again any day".<sup>53</sup> Salisbury wondered how any business, let alone an empire, could be conducted "by the unsupported recollections of aged civilians as to the unauthorised pledges they gave in conversation a quarter of a century before".<sup>54</sup>

The matter, however, was temporarily settled by a compromise offered by Ranbir Singh. He agreed to receive the officer on Special Duty at Srinagar for a period of eight months in a year, while the Joint Commissioner at Leh was permitted to stay at his station for all the twelve months.<sup>55</sup> This compromise was accepted, and the Residency Question was dropped for the time being.

Lord Lytton came to India as Viceroy with a firm resolve to secure her north-west frontier against any possible external attack. The most feared enemy was Russia ; besides her, there were also Afghanistan and China. In the context of India's frontier defence the importance of Kashmir was undoubted,

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<sup>52</sup> Northbrook to Salisbury, 27 March 1874, Northbrook Papers/11, pp.12-18.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, Northbrook to Rawlinson, 25 Dec. 1873, Northbrook Papers/21/2, pp. 168-69.

<sup>54</sup> Salisbury to Northbrook, 24 April, 1874, Northbrook Papers/11, pp. 12-15.

<sup>55</sup> Maharaja to Punjab Governor, 16 April 1874, PMC/5, pp. 1675-82.

and Lord Lytton was fully aware of it. "The remarkable depression or break", he wrote to Cranbrook, the Secretary of State for India, "in the great mountain barrier of the Hindu Kush where it is crossed by the Iskoman and Baroghil passes, occurs just where a section of our frontier with Central Asia is held by a Native Indian State."<sup>56</sup>

In fact, Lytton believed that the natural frontier beyond Kashmir was formed by the convergence of the great mountain ranges of the Himalayas and the Hindu Kush.<sup>57</sup> The wild country to the south of these ranges was in the possession of the petty chieftains of Chitral, Darel, Yasin, Hunza and other small dependencies. They were rather too volatile to remain for long under any political authority, and their vacillations kept the country in a continuous state of flux. Actually, these chiefs were in the habit of tendering, more or less surreptitiously, their allegiance alternately to Kabul, Kashmir and China. But in Lytton's opinion the greater part of the country between Wakhan and the border of India proper was well within the reach of the effective influence of the Government of India, and no foreign influence within that sphere could be tolerated. The recent acquisition "by the Chinese of the dominions of the late Amir of Kashgar", coupled with "the possible existence of a secret understanding between Russia and China for territorial exchanges in Eastern Turkistan", had immensely added, Lytton thought, to the strategical importance of Kashmir.<sup>58</sup> He was certain that sooner or later the Russians would be at Yarkand, and undoubtedly "Cashmere will then become a very important feudatory".<sup>59</sup>

But a clear definition of his frontier policy was deferred by Lytton till, according to the instructions of Salisbury, he had tried for a satisfactory arrangement with Shere Ali, the Afghan

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<sup>56</sup> GI to SS, 28 Feb. 1879, PSLEI/21, pp. 859-63.

<sup>57</sup> Ghose, D. K. *op. cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>58</sup> GI to SS, 28 Feb. 1879, PSLEI/21, pp. 859-63.

<sup>59</sup> Lytton to Northbrook, 10 April 1876, Lytton Papers/518/1, p.75.

Amir. To him both Afghanistan and Kashmir were "indivisible parts of a single imperial question" that also involved an adequate control over the passes of the mountain barrier separating the Indian territories from the plateaus of Central Asia.<sup>60</sup> The idea of a strong buffer in Afghanistan as an offset against the Russian advance in Central Asia was not new, and Lytton's first object was to secure in the Afghan Prince a strong and subordinate ally of the Indian Government who would ungrudgingly accept a British Resident at Kabul. Should that attempt fail, however, Kashmir was to be set up as a buffer<sup>61</sup> and encouraged to extend her influence to Chitral and Yasin. The idea of extending the Maharaja's control over these territories was not of course Lytton's own. As he admitted, it was the parting advice to him by his predecessor<sup>62</sup> who, in his turn, had obtained it from Biddulph.<sup>63</sup> But Lytton was reluctant to do anything before he had tried Shere Ali ; the Punjab authorities were accordingly asked not to dabble in the Chitral question. As a matter of fact, Lytton was even prepared to consider the absorption of Chitral by Afghanistan on certain conditions, if only Shere Ali could be thoroughly secured on behalf of the Indian Government. If not, Chitral would be the trump card in his hand to be played against the Afghan chief.<sup>64</sup>

Lytton's overtures to the Amir for a satisfactory settlement of the Afghan question did not meet with any immediate result, and this led him to reconsider his Kashmir policy. Fortunately for him, the ruler of Chitral, being threatened by Shere Ali, had in the meantime offered his allegiance to the Maharaja.<sup>65</sup> Lytton availed himself of this opportunity for a re-settlement of British relations with Kashmir. He was prepared to allow the Maharaja to take possession of Chitral and Yasin, as a part of a general arrangement involving the permanent appointment of a British Resident in Kashmir and an agent at Gilgit. Such an arrange-

<sup>60</sup> GI to SS, 23 March 1877, PSLEI/13, pp. 235-47; Lytton to Salisbury, 18 September 1876, Lytton Papers/518/1, pp. 460-67.

<sup>61</sup> Lytton to Salisbury, 5 April 1877, Lytton Papers/518/2, pp. 248-49.

<sup>62</sup> Lytton to Egerton, 2 Dec. 1879, Lytton Papers/518/4, pp. 1065-76.

<sup>63</sup> John Biddulph, 19th Hussars, was A.D.C. to Lytton. He was a member of the Yarkand Mission despatched by Northbrook. Afterwards, Agent at Gilgit.

<sup>64</sup> Lytton to Salisbury, 2 May 1876, Lytton Papers/518/1, pp. 129-31.

<sup>65</sup> Aman-ul-Mulk to Maharaja, n.d. PSLEI/14, pp. 643-44.

ment would secure to the Indian Government an effective control over the Iskoman and Baroghil passes and thus serve as a check upon Russian (or even Afghan) encroachment upon the northern frontier of India.<sup>66</sup> With a firm control over Chitral and Yasin on the one hand, and a satisfactory re-settlement of British relations with Khelat on the other, Lord Lytton hoped to secure the two wings of the north-west frontier of India against any invading army.

The Viceroy's Council, however, was at first opposed to the idea of Kashmiri occupation of Chitral and Yasin, but with Salisbury's approval, Lytton found it no difficult task to persuade them to accept his scheme of frontier re-arrangement.<sup>67</sup> It was discussed by him with Ranbir Singh at Madhopore on 17 and 18 November 1876. The Maharaja was but too willing to extend his political influence over Chitral and Yasin, if necessary with British aid, but he "kicked long and strenuously" against the appointment of a British Agent at Gilgit. But Lytton made it a *sine qua non* of the proposed arrangement, and at one stage it seemed as if the negotiation would fall through. The matter, however, was settled when Lytton gave assurances to Ranbir Singh that the Gilgit Agent would not interfere in his domestic affairs, but would only be concerned with obtaining information as to the progress of events beyond the Kashmir frontier.

With the establishment of the Gilgit Agency a provision was made to secure a vicarious control over the tribal chiefs beyond the Kashmir frontier, but Lytton did not rest contented with that. He proceeded to establish a more direct contact with the Kashmir Darbar as, in his opinion, a special importance now attached to Kashmir—a state with which the relations of the Indian Government were imperial rather than local, and whose interests were identical with those of the Indian Empire.<sup>68</sup> He

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<sup>66</sup> Lytton to Salisbury, 22 July 1876, Lytton Papers/518/1, pp.304-06; Lytton to Salisbury, 20 Aug. 1876, *ibid.*, pp.406-07.

<sup>67</sup> Lytton to Salisbury, 24 Oct. 1876, *ibid.*, p.556-62.

<sup>68</sup> Lytton to Henderson, 12 May 1877, Lytton Papers/518/2, pp.362-63. *vide also*, Lytton to the Queen, 10 January 1877, Balfour, B. *Lord Lytton's Indian Administration*, (London 1899) p. 121 : Ranbir Singh is said to have observed, "...our interests are identical with those of the empire".

therefore informed both the Punjab Government and the Maharaja that henceforth the Officer on Special Duty in Kashmir would directly correspond with the Government of India which would take into its own hands the direct conduct of all its political relations with Kashmir. On matters of local or provincial interest, "the British agent was to correspond, as heretofore, directly with the Punjab Government." In lieu of this change, Lytton was prepared to accept an accredited *Vakil* of the Maharaja who would reside at the Viceregal Court for the special representation of the interests of the Kashmir Darbar.<sup>69</sup>

At the same time Lytton prevailed upon Aman-ul-Mulk, the ruler of Chitral, to come to a definitive agreement with the Kashmir Darbar. Though at first inclined to accept the suzerainty of the Maharaja, Aman was reluctant to commit himself to any definite arrangement. Lytton of course invited Chitral agents to attend the Delhi Darbar in order to impress them with the splendour of the British *raj* and explain to them the significance of the Madhopore arrangements. But nothing came out of all his efforts till the Government of India took upon themselves the responsibility of defining the terms of the proposed arrangement between Chitral and Kashmir. It was not till the end of 1878 that Aman committed himself to a treaty of alliance with the Maharaja by which he recognised the suzerainty of the latter in return for an annual subsidy of Rs.12,000.<sup>70</sup>

Matters thus stood for some time till the Kashmir famine of 1877-80 inaugurated a new change. That catastrophe had affected nearly three-fifths of Kashmir's population,<sup>71</sup> and both the Anglo-Indian and the British Press largely attributed it to the misgovernment of the Kashmiri officials. In the name of humanity the annexation of the Happy Valley was suggested by some, while

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<sup>69</sup> India to Punjab, May 14, 1877, PFP/860, May 1877, p.380; Lytton to Maharaja, May 4, 1877, *ibid.*, p. 381.

<sup>70</sup> Aitchison, C.U. *op.cit.*, Vol.XI, p. 427.

<sup>71</sup> P.A.R. 1878-79, pp.2-3; also, Barton, W. *The Princes of India* (London 1934), p. 122.

others urged the British Government to intervene in order to afford the people some immediate relief.<sup>72</sup> The official reaction to the incident was equally pronounced : Cranbrook was 'horrified' at the reports of Kashmir maladministration during the famine,<sup>73</sup> while both Henvey, the Officer on Special Duty in Kashmir, and Lyall, Lytton's Foreign Secretary, urged "immediate and effective intervention."<sup>74</sup>

Lytton was disposed to believe that the "sensational statements" in the newspapers were full of exaggeration, although he was aware that the administration of the state was not above reproach. But in his opinion the Kashmir question was much larger than the mere matter of interference in time of a famine, deserving "very careful consideration as a whole". Starting from this premise he proceeded to reconsider his Kashmir policy in the light not merely of the famine mismanagement, but also of the Afghan war and the recent reports of some treasonable correspondence by the Kashmir Maharaja with both Tashkend and Kabul.<sup>75</sup>

The question of Kashmiri intrigues was a dubious one and formed a subject of prolonged investigation. Although no conclusive evidence was ever obtained, there was some proof to show that Russia was trying to intrigue with the Kashmir Darbar.<sup>76</sup> General Roberts, who had marched to Kabul after the assassination of Louis Cavagnari,<sup>77</sup> and to whom was entrusted the task of investigating the alleged treasonable correspondence of Ranbir Singh, failed to secure any evidence on the subject.<sup>78</sup> Even the Macgregor Commission whose depositions included enquiries about Kashmiri intrigues could not bring

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<sup>72</sup> *Civil and Military Gazette*, 5 Sept. 1878, p.1; *Friend of India*, 17 Sept. 1878, p.831; *Pioneer*, 17 January 1879, pp.1 & 5; *The Times*, 25, 27 and 30 Aug. 1879, Sept. 4. 1879.

<sup>73</sup> Cranbrook to Lytton, 5 Oct. 1879, Lytton Papers/518/4, No.81.

<sup>74</sup> Lytton to Egerton, Dec. 2, 1879, Lytton Papers/518/4 pp.1065-76.

<sup>75</sup> Lytton to Cranbrook, Oct. 2, 1879, and Nov. 5, 1879, Lytton Papers 518/4, pp. 845-46 and pp. 979-86.

<sup>76</sup> SS to GI, 6 Nov. 1879, PSDI/5, pp.315-16.

<sup>77</sup> The British Resident at Kabul. *vide*, Ghose, D.K., *op.cit.*, Ch. III.

<sup>78</sup> Roberts to Lytton, 18 Nov. 1879, Lytton Papers/519/12, No.106.

anything to light suggestive of the Maharaja's treachery.<sup>79</sup> But in Lytton's opinion,

"although the correspondence now in our hands contains no proof of actual treachery on his [the Maharaja's] part, it certainly does prove a very inadequate appreciation of the great confidence reposed in him, and an unfitness for the functions entrusted to him".<sup>80</sup>

For lack of adequate evidence which would have justified an overt action, Lytton proceeded to consider a revision of British relations with Kashmir on other grounds. "As regards our purely political relations", he observed, "such other grounds for the revision of them are, I think, amply furnished by the important change which has taken place in our relations with Afghanistan." Actually, as Lytton explained, when "our present political arrangement was made with him [the Maharaja], Afghanistan was, to us, forbidden ground : Chitral and Yasin were inaccessible, and our relations with them could only be worked indirectly through Kashmir." But the second Afghan war and the consequent disappearance of Shere Ali had completely changed the situation in Afghanistan. That country was indeed a *tabula rasa* and, as Lytton claimed, completely "thrown open to us".<sup>81</sup> With this advantage, he asserted, Chitral and Yasin could be worked directly and much more conveniently from Jalalabad.<sup>82</sup> Besides, the Madhopore arrangement had not worked satisfactorily and Biddulph's task at Gilgit had become unpleasant owing to the inevitable difficulties of his situation.<sup>83</sup> Lytton therefore came to the conclusion that the Maharaja should now be relieved

<sup>79</sup> Depositions of Yahia Khan and Muhammad Sarwar Khan, PSLEI/24, pp.708-10, and pp. 713-14. The Macgregor Commission was appointed to enquire into the circumstances of the murder of Louis Cavagnari at Kabul.

<sup>80</sup> Lytton to Egerton, Dec.2, 1879, Lytton Papers/518/4, pp.1065-1076.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* In fact Lytton's idea was the virtual retention of Jalalabad under the control of the Government of India. This was a part of his scheme of disintegration of Afghanistan. Lytton to Roberts, 20 and 21 March 1880, Roberts Papers/Box File L7, R37/84.

<sup>83</sup> Biddulph, J. Memo on the Present Condition of affairs in Gilgit, March 1881, PSM/A 18.



of all responsibilities and deprived of all powers in regard to Chitral and Yasin ; that he should be simultaneously relieved of the small subsidy he paid to the Mir of Chitral, and of the unwelcome presence of a British Officer at Gilgit. The agency for British relations with Chitral and Yasin should be transferred to Jalalabad, and Ranbir Singh should be plainly told that henceforth he would neither be required, nor permitted, to meddle with the affairs of any state beyond the frontier of Kashmir.<sup>84</sup>

As regards the measures to be taken on the administrative side of the Kashmir question, Lytton proposed the establishment of a regular Resident in Kashmir with certain recognised powers of advice and control. His business would be to watch the proceedings of the Kashmir Darbar and suggest specific measures whenever they appeared to him really required.<sup>85</sup> Even so, the Viceroy could not immediately act for fear of offending the other feudatory states of India.<sup>86</sup> By and large, however, as the internal situation worsened on account of the protracted course of the famine and the Maharaja's illness, Lytton felt obliged to act. He decided to meet the Maharaja at Simla in order to impose upon him a programme of reforms and a permanent British Resident. Personally, Lytton was very firm in his decision; Ranbir Singh must accept his 'advice' or go. As he wrote to Cranbrook :

"Shere Ali's case is a sufficient illustration of the certainty with which 'Don't care' brings Tommy to a bad end."<sup>87</sup>

Lytton, however, was spared the trouble of an obviously unpleasant task by the defeat of the Conservatives at home in the election of 1880. But that did not deter him from recording for his successor's guidance that the Kashmir problem was the most ticklish of those that would first demand his attention.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Lytton to Egerton, 2 Dec. 1879, Lytton Papers/518/4, pp.1065-76.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> Lytton to Cranbrook, 15 Nov.1879, Lytton Papers/518/4, p.979.

<sup>87</sup> Dated 25 Feb. 1880, Lytton Papers/518/6, pp.139-44.

<sup>88</sup> Lytton to Ripon 8 June 1880, *ibid.*, p.365.

To Lord Ripon, Lytton's successor in India, the appointment of Biddulph at Gilgit was a "part of the forward policy"<sup>89</sup> that contained the danger of involvement in the paltry intrigues of the small states beyond the Kashmir border ; at the same time, it was likely to excite the suspicions of the Maharaja as well as of the Afghan Amir.<sup>90</sup> Lyall did not approve of it, while Hartington, the Secretary of State for India, agreed with the Viceroy that the arrangement ought to be brought to an end.<sup>91</sup> In fact, it was agreed on all hands that the experiment of placing a British officer in that out-of-the-way place merely to observe and report, without direct powers of dealing with the frontier chiefs, had not been advantageous to British policy.<sup>92</sup> Even Lytton admitted toward the fag end of his Indian career that the Gilgit arrangement had been "a complete failure".<sup>93</sup> Tribal intrigues and their mutual jealousies had made it clear that unless the Gilgit position was sufficiently strengthened nothing could be done from that isolated post to establish British influence along the Kashmir frontiers. Biddulph actually demanded more powers and reinforcements to deal directly with the frontier tribes. But the Indian Foreign Office considered it difficult to render any "material assistance" to Biddulph "in regard to the protection and tranquillity of this remote frontier".<sup>94</sup> Ripon's doubts about the usefulness of the Agency were confirmed by the Yasinee attack on Gilgit in October 1880. This finally decided him to withdraw the Gilgit Agent from his distant post in 1881.<sup>95</sup>

Ripon, however, considered that the Government of India was still bound by the engagements made with Ranbir Singh at

<sup>89</sup> For a detailed discussion of Forward Policy along the North-West Frontier, Ghose, D.K. *England and Afghanistan* (Calcutta 1960) Ch. I.

<sup>90</sup> Ripon to Hartington, 27 July 1880, Ripon Papers/I.S. 290/5, Vol.I, p.43

<sup>91</sup> Hartington to Ripon, 10 Dec.1880, Ripon Papers/Add. MSS. 43,566, ff.13-17.

<sup>92</sup> Note by Alfred Lyall, 13 June 1881, Ripon Papers/Add MSS.43,575.f.44.

<sup>93</sup> Lytton to Roberts, 20 and 21 March 1880, Roberts Papers/Box File L7, R/37/84. That is why he wanted to transfer the Political Agency from Gilgit to Jalalabad, and retain the latter under India's control as part of his scheme of disintegration of Afghanistan.

<sup>94</sup> Biddulph, Memo. March 1881, PSM/A 18, India to Henvey, 29 June 1880, encl. 23 in GI to SS, 27 July 1880, PSLEI/26, p.330.

<sup>95</sup> GI to SS, 15 July 1881, PSLEI/29, pp. 235-37.

Madhopore, and agreed with Lyall that the Maharaja should be instructed to take no important step on the frontier without consulting Henvey.<sup>96</sup> Further, as Lyall desired, the Government of India reserved full discretion to send back an officer to Gilgit if this should hereafter seem desirable.<sup>97</sup>

To withdraw the Gilgit Agency might have been easy, but to devise an adequate alternative to Lytton's policy was a difficult task.<sup>98</sup> Ripon came to India at a time when the misgovernment of the Kashmir Darbar had become a subject of gossip, and reports of Kashmiri intrigues with Russia were rife. Ripon of course refused to take any notice of the reports of the Maharaja's intrigues, but he decided to take an active interest in the affairs of the Kashmir Darbar. Shortly after his arrival in India Ripon urged on Ranbir Singh the immediate need for reform of his administration ;<sup>99</sup> only a year later Henvey was asked to remind the Maharaja again.<sup>100</sup> Hartington agreed with Ripon that they had a very heavy "responsibility for improving this abominable government".<sup>101</sup> He was particularly annoyed that the Officer on Special Duty in Kashmir was precluded from enquiring too closely, or reporting, on the administration of Kashmir, and desired that a more decided course of action should be pursued. Ripon agreed to do so and, before long, asked Colonel Oliver St. John, Henvey's successor at Srinagar, to submit a report on the administration of the state.

St. John reported that the country on which Nature had bestowed her gifts so lavishly was gradually dwindling in popu-

<sup>96</sup> Ripon on Lyall's note of 13 June 1881, Ripon Papers/Add. MSS.43,575, ff.44-45.

<sup>97</sup> GI to SS, July 15, 1881, PSLEI/29, pp. 235-37.

<sup>98</sup> Henvey had soon occasion to complain that the Maharaja was not acting up to his obligations to keep the Kashmir agent constantly informed of the affairs of the frontier. The Government of India was therefore obliged to instruct Henvey to remind the Kashmir ruler that he had undertaken to do so at the time of the withdrawal of the Gilgit Agency.

<sup>99</sup> Ripon to Maharaja, 13 July 1880, IFP/1922, Sept.1882, Cons.268, pp.217-18.

<sup>100</sup> Ripon to Hartington, 22 Oct.1881, Ripon Papers/I.S.290/5, Vol.II., 238-40.

<sup>101</sup> Hartington to Ripon, 28 Sept.1881, Ripon Papers/Add MSS. 43,567, ff.79-82.

lation and revenue. The public treasury was empty ; speculation was rife at all levels ; and the officials and workmen were suffering from arrears of pay. He considered that the maladministration of Kashmir justified British interference, though not indeed during the lifetime of Ranbir Singh. But with his demise, certain obligations and unwritten bonds would pass away, and then, St. John suggested, the new Maharaja ought to be brought down to the level of the other feudatories of the empire. The Officer on Special Duty should be replaced by a regular Resident, if necessary under some other name, with an assistant to remain all the year round in Kashmir. The British flag should be hoisted over the Residency, and measures symbolic of the paramount power ought to be imposed on the new chief. This should be followed by a stringent warning about the maladministration of Kashmir, "to be followed if necessary by more stringent measures."<sup>102</sup>

Even so, for some time to come Ripon was hesitant about interfering too closely in matters of Kashmir administration. To see for himself the condition of the state, he undertook a tour to Kashmir and was sorry to find that the political condition of the country was very unsatisfactory. He yet agreed with St. John that nothing could be done during the lifetime of Ranbir Singh to improve the situation, and that the Government of India should bide its time till the accession of a new prince.<sup>103</sup>

A decision, however, could not be long delayed. Early in 1884 St. John again reported that

"the administration of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, always bad, even among Native States, has been steadily deteriorating since the commencement of the Maharaja's illness, and now appears to be not far from a point at which the machine will come to a standstill altogether."<sup>104</sup>

<sup>102</sup> St. John to Ripon, 22 July 1883, Ripon Papers/Add MSS. 43,613, 74-83(b).

<sup>103</sup> Ripon to Halifax, 17 Nov. 1883, Ripon Papers/I.S. 290/7, Vol. IV, pp. 180(a)-(b).

<sup>104</sup> Encl. in GI to SS, 7 April 1884, PSLEI/40, p.27; PP, 1890, LIV, C.6072, pp. 231-32.

The state of affairs, in St. John's opinion, was such as to make it fairly certain that the Maharaja's death, which in the advanced stage of his mortal disease<sup>105</sup> could occur at any moment, was sure to be the signal for a general debacle, if not for serious outbreaks. It therefore seemed advisable to him that a line of action should be determined in advance, so that no time might be lost in discussion after the Maharaja's death.

St. John seems to have been rather predisposed to establish his personal control over the Kashmir Darbar. It is not unlikely as well that he deliberately gave a very bad account of the state of affairs in order to force the hands of the Indian Government. Berkeley, who once acted for St. John, gave a very different opinion about maladministration in Kashmir :

"So far as I have seen, things are not worse than in several native states in India.....Of course there are oppression and corruption. Where are they not, even in our own districts, but it strikes me that Henvey and St. John.... have exaggerated matters."<sup>106</sup>

But Ripon attached greater importance to St. John's reports and decided to take advantage of Ranbir Singh's death "to secure improved administration for the Kashmir State".<sup>107</sup> In this matter he had the full support of Lord Kimberley, the new Secretary of State for India, who agreed with him that, in introducing any changes, the Government of India should appear as little as possible and ought to endeavour to have them proposed by the Darbar.<sup>108</sup> With Kimberley's private approval Ripon proceeded officially to lay his case before the Secretary of State for India and his Council. Meanwhile, in anticipation of the sanction of the Home authorities, he had sent instructions for

<sup>105</sup> He had long been suffering from diabetes. Gradually other complications set in which hastened the end.

<sup>106</sup> Ripon to Kimberley, 9 May 1884, Ripon Papers/I.S.290/5, Vol. V, encl. in No. 27, pp. 89-92.

<sup>107</sup> Ripon to Kimberley, 19 Feb. 1884, *ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>108</sup> Kimberley to Ripon, 21 March 1884, Ripon Papers/Add. MSS. 43,575, ff.15-19.

St. John's guidance in case an emergency should arise in Kashmir. In his official despatch,<sup>109</sup> sent home on April 7, 1884, Lord Ripon, after referring to the misgovernment of the Kashmir Darbar, disposed of the question of succession, as St. John had suggested. In this matter he refused to be guided by any other consideration than that of the law of primogeniture, and bestowed the crown upon Pratap Singh, the eldest son of Maharaja Ranbir Singh.

As regards the Kashmir administration, Ripon asked the Secretary of State for his official sanction to the appointment of a Resident Political Officer who would exercise a general supervision over the affairs of the Maharaja, without however any actual position in the government of the state. The measure proposed was

"called for not merely by the need of assisting and supervising administrative reforms, but also by the increasing importance to the Government of India of watching events beyond the North-Western frontier of Kashmir. Any disturbances which continued misgovernment might create in Kashmir would be acutely felt on the frontiers of Afghanistan ; the connexion between Kashmir and its dependent chiefships would in all probability be severed; and grave political complications might easily ensue."<sup>110</sup>

Ripon considered it necessary to provide for efficient political supervision, not only in the interests of the state of Kashmir, but in the interests as well of the Indian Empire.

The instructions for St. John's guidance, repeated in August, contained a scheme of reform which was to be gradually implemented after the accession of the new chief. In order to afford

<sup>109</sup> GI to SS, 7 April 1884, PSLEI/40, p.27; PP, 1890, LIV, C.6072, pp.231-32.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

the Maharaja all possible help in the introduction of such reform the Viceroy agreed to grant him a loan from Imperial revenues, and also to place at his disposal the services of any officers of the British Government specially qualified to assist the new administration in carrying out the contemplated measures. But with reference to the relations existing between Kashmir and the states upon her northern borders, Ripon merely asked St. John to keep a close attention over affairs beyond the Kashmir border and to advise Pratap Singh freely on all matters of frontier policy. In thus instructing the Political Resident, Ripon was aware that circumstances might occur to which the terms of his instructions might not be strictly applicable. In such a contingency, St. John was asked to use his own discretion. In addition, he was urged to keep it in mind that his instructions were "strictly confidential" and must on no account be divulged till the time should come for acting upon them.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1885, encl. 1, PSLEI/45, p. 1019.

## CHAPTER II

### THE NEW REGIME 1885-87

Lord Ripon left India on his homeward journey on December 15, 1884. It was hardly a week after his retirement that St. John drew the attention of the new Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, to the instructions he had received in previous August. Personally, St. John would have welcomed an immediate change in the Kashmir administration—"at all events to a limited extent, before the opportunity by a change of ruler occurs".<sup>1</sup> But Dufferin was unwilling to deviate from the line of action mapped out by his predecessor. He of course confirmed the instructions with which St. John had been earlier furnished, but asked him not to act upon them before the death of Maharaja Ranbir Singh.<sup>2</sup>

That event, however, was not long in coming. Ranbir Singh died on September 12, 1885. His death was mourned by his friends in India ; the Queen regretted the demise of an old chief ;<sup>3</sup> while the Government of India lost no time in communicating their message of condolence to Pratap Singh and confirming him to the Chiefship of Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>4</sup> Lord Randolph Churchill, the new Secretary of State for India, was however anxious to know whether the Viceroy intended to act on the proposals made by Ripon's Government. Personally, he was inclined to see that measures were taken preparing for the future annexation of the country. For "many reasons" it appeared to him that the Government of Kashmir "ought now to be in our hands."<sup>5</sup> But that was not the view of the Government of India.

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<sup>1</sup> St. John to Dufferin, 23 December 1884, Dufferin Papers/Reel 528, pp.18-19.

<sup>2</sup> Dufferin to St. John, 29 Dec.1884, *ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>3</sup> SS to GI, 19 Sept.1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 519, p. 88.

<sup>4</sup> Encl. 7 and 14 in GI to SS, 19 Oct.1885, PSLEI/45, p.1019.

<sup>5</sup> Churchill to Dufferin, 16 Sept.1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 517, p.183.



About this time, there was indeed a feeling in certain quarters that the administration of Kashmir needed a thorough overhaul, and that the brightest opportunity had come to give effect to such a change.<sup>6</sup> As Pratap Singh seemed a weak ruler, he was supposed to need some able guidance from "a Political Resident of the first class".<sup>7</sup> Personally, Lord Dufferin hoped that a young chief would be glad "to signalise his accession to power by some endeavours to improve his administration".<sup>8</sup> A Political Resident was of course to be appointed, but the change, in his opinion, was to be effected "in as quiet and unostentatious a manner as possible".<sup>9</sup> St. John was asked to communicate to the new ruler, gently but firmly, that the administration of Kashmir "must be reformed", and that for the future the British representative in his capital would have the same status and duties as Political Residents in other Native States.<sup>10</sup>

The message referring to the introduction of reforms was received by the Kashmir Darbar without any mark of surprise, but the announcement of the immediate appointment of a Resident was an unexpected blow to the Maharaja and his Ministers. St. John was asked to use his personal influence to obtain a respite for the Maharaja before the appointment of a Resident, "in order that he might get the credit for reforms he had long made up his mind to introduce".<sup>11</sup> Failing in that effort, Pratap Singh wrote to Lord Dufferin, entreating him not to change the status of the Officer on Special Duty, so that his own position might not be compromised with his subjects. He did not deny that the existing state of affairs in Kashmir required the immediate introduction of reforms. But he assured the Viceroy that he would spare no pains to justify his accession to power by making his country "a model of a well-governed state" in alliance with

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<sup>6</sup> *Civil and Military Gazette*, 16 Sept, 1885, p.1; *Englishman*, 23 Sept. 1885, p.5.

<sup>7</sup> Report of the Kashmir Correspondent, 13 Sept. 1885, *Englishman*. 23 Sept. 1885, p.5.

<sup>8</sup> Dufferin to Churchill, 21 Sept.1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 517, p.221.

<sup>9</sup> Dufferin to Churchill, 12 Oct.1885, *ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>10</sup> GI to SS, 17 Sept.1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 519, p.85.

<sup>11</sup> St. John to Durand, 16 Sept.1885, encl. 14 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1885. PSLEI/45, p.1019.

the Government of India.<sup>12</sup> Pratap did not leave the matter there ; simultaneously, he sent Diwan Gobind Sahai to lay his case personally before the Viceroy.<sup>13</sup>

As St. John reported,<sup>14</sup> the state of affairs in the Kashmir Darbar was then favourable for the new Chief to introduce reforms in the country. At the time of Ranbir Singh, Wazir Punnu was the most powerful figure in the Maharaja's Council. His name was at once a by-word and a reproach among the people, and all the tyranny and oppression from which they suffered was invariably laid to his door, though not always with justice. Had he survived his old master, he would have been the leading spirit in the Councils of the new Chief, but only six days before his master's death Punnu fell down dead in the Darbar. That was a stroke of good fortune for the opposite party at the Court, represented by Diwan Anant Ram and Nilambar Mukherjee.<sup>15</sup>

Another fortunate circumstance for the new Chief was "the general prosperity of the country", as far as it could be prosperous after the devastations of the recent famine. The agricultural outturn had been satisfactory in 1884 and the prospects of the crops then in the ground were good. Commerce was shown by the Punjab trade reports to be steadily improving,<sup>16</sup> and Pratap Singh had in Babu Nilambar and Diwan Anant Ram two very faithful and well-intentioned Ministers to whom he could look for advice and guidance.

With the period of mourning over, Pratap Singh formally took his seat in the Darbar, and as Dufferin had expected, pledged himself to govern his country with justice and moderation. He warned his officials that no corruption or incompetence would be tolerated at any level. To commemorate his "auspicious

<sup>12</sup> Pratap Singh to Dufferin, 18 Sept. 1885, encl. 17 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1885, *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Kashmir Resident to India, 18 Sept. 1885, encl. 11 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1885, *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> St. John to Durand, 16 Sept. 1885, encl. 14 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1885, PSLEI/45, p.1019.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, *Civil and Military Gazette*, 16 Sept. 1885, p.1; Sufi, G.M.D., *op.cit.*, p.805.

<sup>16</sup> *PAR.* 1884-85, No.168, p.104.

accession", he abolished certain imposts and customs which, as St. John observed, constituted "a valuable boon to the people".<sup>17</sup> Apart from that, money was advanced from the palace to pay the troops leaving them only five months in arrears. But St. John was not happy with what was done by the Maharaja. He believed that Pratap Singh had inherited a full share of his father's obstinacy and cunning, and although he would consent to certain surface reforms, on the cardinal points of freeing trade, improving communications, and making a proper land settlement, he would offer as much opposition as he dared!<sup>18</sup>

In the meantime, Gobind Sahai had a private interview with Lord Dufferin at Simla. He tried to persuade the Viceroy to defer the appointment of a Resident till the Maharaja had a fair trial to justify his accession to power. But Lord Dufferin pleaded his inability even to discuss the matter, as the decision, he said, had already been taken by the Home Government.<sup>19</sup> He, however, assured the Diwan that the appointment of the Resident was not a penal measure, and should in no way be considered "derogatory to the dignity of the Kashmir State". He could not see how an arrangement, which had been "accepted by all the great feudatories of the Queen", could lower the prestige of the ruler of Kashmir.<sup>20</sup> The measure, he explained, was necessitated by two considerations. The first was the disorganised state of the Maharaja's administration, which was due in a large measure to the protracted illness of his father. What was more important was that the course of events on the north-western frontier of India made it specially necessary that the appointment of the Resident in Kashmir should be established on a clear and recognised basis, as the Maharaja's territories occupied an important geographical position on that frontier.<sup>21</sup> The Diwan was

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<sup>17</sup> Resident to India, 26 Sept. 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 528, p.252.

<sup>18</sup> St. John to Durand, 27 Sept. 1885, encl. 18 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1885, PSLEI/45, p. 1019.

<sup>19</sup> Memorandum of 28 Sept. 1885, on the meeting between Dufferin and Gobind Sahai, encl. 20 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1885, *ibid*.

<sup>20</sup> The Home Government fully shared this view. Churchill believed that the measures taken would conduce to the material well-being of the State of Kashmir, and tend to the better security of Imperial interests. SS to GI, 27 Nov. 1885, PSDI/11, pp.62-67.

<sup>21</sup> Memorandum in encl. 20 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1885, PSLEI/45, p.1019.

told that the Resident had been instructed to abstain from unnecessary and improper interference in the internal affairs of Kashmir, and that therefore Pratap Singh should regard that officer "neither as a governing authority, nor as a pedagogue, but as a friend and adviser".<sup>22</sup>

Simultaneously, St. John was instructed to communicate to the Maharaja that for the future the retention of an agent by the Kashmir Darbar at the headquarters of the Government of India would not be necessary. No such arrangement was required for the transaction of business with the other great feudatories of the Indian Government, and therefore in all political relations with the Kashmir State in future the British Resident should be recognised as the accredited representative of the Government of India.<sup>23</sup>

This, however, was not all. Apart from the instructions of Lord Ripon's Government, St. John was asked to gradually place certain other matters on a sound basis, such as the construction of a railway to Kashmir, and the improvement of Kashmir roads. But by far the most important of all was the location of a British force at some point or points within the Maharaja's territories. It was to be explained to the Maharaja that the British Government had placed cantonments in all the principal states of India, and so he need not entertain any apprehensions on account of the proposed measure. It would be carried out in Kashmir, as it had been elsewhere, with the utmost consideration for the privileges and feelings of the ruler. But, since the British Government were bound by treaty obligations to protect Kashmir from foreign aggression and were likewise committed to preserve the general interests of the Indian Empire, it was desirable that a British force should be stationed within the Maharaja's dominions.<sup>24</sup>

These measures were dictated by the war-scare of 1885. That year, on 30 March, a Russian advance upon Panjdeh, a

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Durand to St. John, Oct. 5, 1885, encl. 21 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1885, PSLEI/45, p.1019.

<sup>24</sup> Durand to St. John, 19 Oct. 1885; NAI/FDP, Sec.E, Dec.1885, Cons.243.

territory of disputable ownership upon the northern frontiers of Afghanistan, very nearly precipitated a war between England and Russia. Gladstone, then the Prime Minister of England, asked for and readily obtained a vote of 11 million.<sup>25</sup> At that time the Indian states came forward with striking enthusiasm and unanimity to place their resources at the disposal of the government.<sup>26</sup> The danger which then seemed imminent was happily averted, but it led to the revival of the proposal for a reorganisation of the Indian army. Suggestions were made for utilising the military resources of the Native States,<sup>27</sup> and Dufferin set himself to the task of adequately providing for the defence of the Indian Empire. A defence committee, with the Commander-in-Chief as president, sat to formulate a comprehensive scheme of Indian defence. The defective organisation of the army in India was recognised, schemes were devised for increasing the strength of the army, and recommendations were made for the improvement of communications and the construction of defensive works at important strategical points.<sup>28</sup>

Meanwhile, the appalling devastations of the recent famine in Kashmir, along with those in other Indian states, had led during Ripon's viceroyalty to the formulation of a famine code for adoption by these states. When a copy of it was submitted by St. John to the new Maharaja, he readily approved of it and promised its implementation. But St. John was more interested in the completion of the Murree-Kashmir cart road, the construction of which had by then made some considerable progress. As Officer on Special Duty in Kashmir he had earlier emphasised its importance in no uncertain terms :

“Indeed if nothing else be done the road alone must make a vast change in Kashmir”.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>25</sup> For the Panjdeh Crisis in detail, Ghose, D.K. *op.cit.*, Ch.VI.

<sup>26</sup> Viceroy to SS, 23 March 1885, and SS to Viceroy, 24 March 1885, PSHC/71, p.749.

<sup>27</sup> Note by Major D.W.K. Barr, 14 May 1885, PSM/D. 174.

<sup>28</sup> GI to SS, 10 July 1885 and enclosures, PSHC/81, pp.967-80.

<sup>29</sup> St. John to Ripon, 22 July 1883, Ripon Papers/Add. MSS. 43613, ff.74-83.

This was reiterated shortly after Pratap Singh's accession : in addition to being "essential to the reforms which were then being pressed on the Darbar, the road would increase the cultivated area of the country and help settlement operations".

The Resident lost no time in taking up yet another important matter with the Maharaja. Earlier he had come to know from a Press announcement that new troops would be raised from the Dogras to augment the Bengal cavalry.<sup>30</sup> So he arranged an interview with Pratap Singh, and obtained an assurance from him that orders would be at once issued to give all assistance to recruiting parties for raising troops in the Maharaja's territories.<sup>31</sup> But Pratap was reluctant to agree to the proposal for establishment of a British cantonment in Kashmir. When he came to know of it from the Resident, he felt considerably annoyed ; and to settle all outstanding questions with the Indian Government, he hastened to Calcutta, accompanied by Nilambar Mukherjee, for a personal interview with Lord Dufferin.

On his way, the Maharaja met Aitchison, the Governor of the Punjab, at Lahore. Pratap bitterly complained to him against the severance of Kashmir from its old connection with the Punjab Government, and asked for its restoration. Aitchison was sympathetic, and though not inclined to

"interfere with the appointment of the Resident or Political Agent by the Government of India, nor with his powers as respects the Kashmir Government",

he yet wrote to Dufferin urging him to reconsider if it was possible to meet the Maharaja's wishes.<sup>32</sup> Dufferin referred the matter to his Foreign Secretary, Mortimer Durand, and presumably upon his advice, refused to take any action in the matter. Actually, Durand was opposed to a "restoration of the old order of things"

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<sup>30</sup> *Civil and Military Gazette*, 22 Sept. 1885, p.3.

<sup>31</sup> St. John to Durand, 27 October 1885, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., Dec.1885, Cons. 245.

<sup>32</sup> Aitchison to Dufferin, 30 Dec. 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 529, pp.460 (a)-62.

which afforded the Maharaja an opportunity to play off the Punjab Government against the Political Officer in Kashmir. He believed that any such measure would only retard the progress of the reform measures :

"If Cashmere is not clearly shown now that he must keep his head straight, that country will be ten years hence in just as bad a state as it was a year ago."<sup>33</sup>

The meeting between Dufferin and Pratap Singh took place in Calcutta in the middle of January 1886. In this meeting and the subsequent communications between the Viceroy and the Maharaja three things came up for consideration, namely, first, the establishment of a British cantonment in Kashmir territory ; secondly, the discontinuance of the arrangement under which a Kashmir *Vakil* had been stationed at the headquarters of the Government of India ; and thirdly, the right of British traders to buy lands in Kashmir.<sup>34</sup> In spite of Pratap Singh's protests, the last two questions were easily disposed of. The circumstances under which Lord Lytton had allowed a Kashmir *Vakil* to remain at the Viceregal Court, having considerably changed in recent years especially due to the appointment of a British Resident, Lord Dufferin maintained that he could not have any other channel of communication with the Maharaja than the Political Resident. About the right of British traders to buy lands in Kashmir, Dufferin set aside all arguments by the Maharaja and asserted that,

"The whole of India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, now formed a part of Her Majesty's Empire, and it was absurd to suppose that Her Majesty's European subjects could be subjected to disabilities of this kind in one of the feudatory states of the Empire."<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Durand to Wallace, 6 Jan. 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 529, pp.22(c)-(d)..

<sup>34</sup> Memorandum of conversation between Lord Dufferin and Pratap Singh, dated 15 January 1886, NAI/FDP, Sec. E, July 1886, Cons. 426.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

On the question of the establishment of a British cantonment, however, Pratap offered the most stubborn resistance. He was personally very much disinclined to see British troops stationed in his territory, and laboured under the apprehension that the measure would badly compromise his "independent status". He feared that the British officers quartered in Kashmir would interfere with his officials and subjects ; the collisions that would consequently occur would result in British interference with the internal administration of the state. So he argued that the measure contemplated was contrary to the treaty of Amritsar,<sup>36</sup> and offered instead to raise an army of his own to be trained by British officers in his paid employment. In return for that, he demanded that the Indian Government should grant him a subsidy necessary for the maintenance of such a force. A similar subsidy, he argued, was being paid to the Amir of Kabul for maintaining an army to check Russian advance towards India, and urged Dufferin to adopt the same policy towards his state. He assured the Viceroy that, if left to himself, he would do all in his power to resist a Russian advance; as an example of his loyalty he referred to the large sum of money he had spent in the construction of the Murree-Kohala cart road.<sup>37</sup>

But Lord Dufferin, though prepared to consider Pratap's representation, was determined that there should be no misapprehension in his mind about his position *vis-a-vis* the British Government. He admitted that it was quite likely that the development of communications, and other circumstances, might obviate the necessity of establishing a cantonment in Kashmir. But he made it quite clear that if in future the Government of India should decide in favour of such a cantonment, he would expect the Maharaja "as a loyal feudatory of the Queen Empress to accept the decision with readiness and goodwill".<sup>38</sup> With this reservation, Dufferin dropped the cantonment question. His decision in this respect seems to have

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Maharaja to Dufferin, 14 Jan. 1886, NAI/FDP, Sec. E, July 1886, Cons.423.

<sup>38</sup> Dufferin to Maharaja, 16 March 1886, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, July 1886, Cons.427.



been considerably influenced by the opinion of his Commander-in-Chief, Sir Frederick Roberts. When the Viceroy had first proposed the measure to Roberts, the latter was in favour of it and recommended sending a whole brigade to Kashmir.<sup>39</sup> St. John preferred two battalions, but Durand advised caution and suggested a small force to begin with.<sup>40</sup> Before Dufferin finally decided upon the question, Pratap Singh, on his way to Calcutta, had met Roberts who was then busy arranging a camp of exercise at Panipat. The Maharaja's protest against the establishment of a British cantonment, coupled with his recent topographical knowledge of the northern frontiers, brought a change in Roberts' opinion. He thought that it was not possible for any large army to enter Kashmir from the north or north-west and was therefore reluctant to recommend the immediate adoption of the proposed measure on military grounds. He of course acknowledged that "there may be political reasons, of which he is unaware, which would outweigh them".<sup>41</sup>

Meanwhile in early January 1886, St. John had sent to the Government of India a very strong report against the Kashmir Darbar.<sup>42</sup> After reiterating his conviction that Pratap Singh was a weak and bad ruler, St. John went on to describe how in the first four months of the Maharaja's reign the condition of Kashmir had steadily deteriorated. The Maharaja's first act was to dispense with the services of the Council, with the assistance of which his father had transacted nearly all public business. Sheikh Wahab-ud-din, the only Muhammadan member, was promptly dismissed from the state service. Raja Moti Singh of Punch, the Maharaja's first cousin, and Pratap's two brothers, Ram Singh and Amar Singh, were excluded from all participation in the affairs of the state. Diwan Anant Ram was merely the titular Prime Minister, all power really being in the hands of Gobind Sahai, his son Lakhpat Rai, his cousin Amar Nath, and a Kashmiri Pandit, Muhanand Jee, whose corruption was so

<sup>39</sup> Roberts to Dufferin, 9 Dec. 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 529, p. 407.

<sup>40</sup> Durand to Roberts, 31 Dec. 1885, Roberts Papers/Box File D 1/4, No. R26/2.

<sup>41</sup> Roberts to Dufferin, 1 Jan. 1886, Roberts Papers/R.98/1, p. 2; Chamberlain to Durand, 3 Jan. 1886, *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>42</sup> Memo. of 8 January 1886. NAI/FDP, Sec. E. March 1889, Cons. 108.

notorious and flagitious as to bring upon him the displeasure of the late Maharaja.

The most capable man in the whole state, and by far the most educated and liberal of all, except Nilambar, was Diwan Lachman Dass, who was a personal favourite of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, but distasteful to his successor. As Governor of Kashmir he had done his best to improve the condition of the inhabitants of the Valley, and had been to a considerable extent successful. But Gobind Sahai, Amar Nath, and Nilambar were all opposed to him, and since the accession of Pratap Singh all efforts had been made to thwart him and induce him to resign.<sup>43</sup>

Coming to the backstairs influences which were all powerful with the Maharaja, St. John named three men who were doing most of the mischief within the state. They were Miran Bakhsh, a Muhammadan of low origin, Seth Ramanand, a *Jotishi* or Astrologer, and a Hindu named Sawal Singh, generally known at the Court as the *dewalia* or mad man. This man pretended to have spiritual communion with the ghost of a departed Raja, whose power over the Maharaja's destiny was supposed to be unlimited. Most of Pratap Singh's actions were regulated in accordance with the dictates of this spirit, communicated through the *dewalia*. The Maharaja's dependence upon this mad man was looked upon with disgust by most people, and even the Maharani Bishen Devi, Pratap Singh's wife, complained very bitterly of Sawal Singh's conduct.<sup>44</sup>

These facts, in St. John's opinion, established beyond doubt the Maharaja's "unfitness to rule", and precluded "all hope of any material progress under the present regime". It "seemed clear" to him that, instead of reform and improvement, the administration of the country would "continue to grow worse and worse", and that the money which would, under favourable

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* Report of the Kashmir Correspondent, 13 Sept. 1885, *Englishman*, 23 Sept. 1885, p.5.

<sup>44</sup> Bishen Devi to Dufferin, Nov. 20, 1886, and Bishen Devi to Lt. Governor, Punjab, Nov. 25, 1886, PSDOC/3, First Series, p. 816; PFP/2923, Native States, Part B, Feb. 1887, Cons. 3-9, and Cons. 29-30.

circumstances, have sufficed for the rapid development of material progress would be lost to it. St. John was 'convinced' that as long as Pratap Singh were allowed any real power, that power would be misused ! Every encroachment upon his "comparative independence" would be fought with every possible weapon ; no real reforms would be made, and such measures as might be "forced upon the Darbar would be grudgingly carried out and evaded in every possible way"; while the resources of the state would be "squandered on unworthy favourites".<sup>45</sup>

But Pratap Singh, indeed, had not altogether neglected reforms. The day he had taken his seat in the Darbar he had issued a proclamation abolishing or mitigating certain imposts and customs. Shortly afterwards, a tax called *ravangi* or *pushmina*, levied at the rate of 20 per cent on the price of *pushmina* (goat wool) goods which went out of the town of Srinagar, was remitted altogether. At about the same time, the state monopolies on paper and lime were removed ; bribe-taking was declared illegal and liable to severe punishment;<sup>46</sup> and, as St. John reported, "all burdens on the land in Kashmir", and certain taxes (*abwabs*) and cesses (*siwas*) were remitted in the Jammu territory.<sup>47</sup> The Maharaja, anxious as he was to encourage trade between his territory and British India, put an end to vexatious restrictions on frontier trade ; and he could "doubtless claim credit" for initiating a salutary reform by abolishing the *thana-patti* or marriage tax on the Muhammadans.<sup>48</sup> On top of all this, the cart road from the Punjab to Kashmir had made some considerable progress under the patronage of the Maharaja.<sup>49</sup> Even so, St. John complained that Pratap Singh's proclamations had "not been obtained without the exertion of considerable pressure", although he admitted "that the oppression complained of during the late Maharaja's reign has now ceased to a great extent".<sup>50</sup>

<sup>45</sup> St. John's Memo. of 8 January 1886, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, March, 1889, Cons. 108; PSDOC/3, First Series, p. 823.

<sup>46</sup> Note by Cunningham, W.H., Dec.12, 1889, PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 824-33.

<sup>47</sup> St. John to Durand, March 10, 15 & 27, 1886, with enclosures, IFP/2783, June 1886, Cons. 42-46.

<sup>48</sup> Note by Cunningham, Dec. 12, 1889, PSDOC/3, First Series, pp.831 and 833; also, Bose, J.C., *Cashmere and its Prince* (Calcutta 1889),pp.13-20.

<sup>49</sup> St. John to Durand, March 19, 1886, IFP/2784, July 1886, Cons.169 and 170-77.

<sup>50</sup> St. John to Durand, March 10, 1886. IFP/2783, June 1886, Cons.42.

Such was the state of affairs when, due to an untoward incident, a change of Ministry took place in Kashmir. Owing to very hard work, Diwan Anant Ram, the Prime Minister, had lost his mental balance. He was replaced by Diwan Gobind Sahai, while Nilambar Mukherjee was appointed Finance Minister. The two were made jointly responsible for the administration of the state.<sup>51</sup> As St. John reported, the administration thus inaugurated did not possess the confidence of the people or of the better class of officials, who wanted to see power transferred to the Maharaja's brothers in conjunction with Diwan Lachman Dass. In St. John's opinion, Gobind Sahai was notoriously corrupt, with no experience in administrative work, while Nilambar was believed to be a mere theorist, anxious perhaps for reforms, but ignorant how to carry them out. His influence over the Maharaja was "solely due to his ready invention of plausible pretexts for resisting the supremacy of the British Government and for evading compliance with its advice".<sup>52</sup> Neither was strong enough to check the influence exerted over the Maharaja by his favourites, and although Pratap had promised his Ministers that he would not interfere in the details of government, there was little chance of the promise being kept. The Resident "was convinced" that such reforms as could not be evaded would be carried out and the condition of the people so far improved, "but for the radical reform in the financial administration of the country which is its most essential want", it would be useless to look to the new Ministry.<sup>53</sup>

His lack of confidence in the Ministry of Gobind Sahai was reiterated by St. John shortly before he left the Kashmir Residency on promotion. He complained that neither Gobind Sahai nor

<sup>51</sup> Maharaja to Viceroy, 3 March 1886, IFP/2783, June 1886, Cons.91.

<sup>52</sup> St. John to Durand, 20 March 1886, *ibid.*, Cons. 90. Durand, however, thought otherwise. During Pratap Singh's interview with Lord Dufferin at Calcutta Nilambar acted as the Maharaja's interpreter. As Durand observed: "Babu Nilambar interpreted well but with a constant tendency to omit or soften away anything that could be distasteful to the Maharaja, and to give more than proportionate weight to the Maharaja's friendly assurances. For example, he endeavoured to omit altogether His Excellency's warning as to the possibility of the Maharaja losing the support of the British Government...." NAI/FDP, Sec.E, July 1886, Cons.426.

<sup>53</sup> St. John to Durand, 20 March 1886, IFP/2783, June 1886, Cons.90.

Nilambar was competent to guide the destinies of the Kashmir State, while both were hostile to the Indian Government. The only man with some administrative ability was the governor of Kashmir, Diwan Lachman Dass, who unfortunately was being passed over in every possible way.<sup>54</sup> Meanwhile Robert Sandeman had been sanctioned nineteen months' furlough to England,<sup>55</sup> and St. John was appointed to officiate as Governor-General's Agent in Baluchistan.<sup>56</sup> T.J.C. Plowden<sup>57</sup> was ordered to take over personally from the out-going Resident as there were "matters requiring personal explanation".<sup>58</sup> The new Resident was to be tried as St. John, Dufferin's first experiment, "had not answered very well".<sup>59</sup>

About the same time Pratap Singh was making preparations for his installation ceremony—an occasion which had been deferred till the hot weather in accordance with the calculations of the Maharaja's astrologers. He had invited both Dufferin and Aitchison to grace the occasion by their presence. About the middle of April, he sent Diwan Gobind Sahai to Aitchison to re-affirm the invitation and "explain a few other matters".<sup>60</sup> The object of the mission was ostensibly to play off the Punjab Government against the Resident; although not explained in so many words, it was clearly hinted at by the Diwan.<sup>61</sup>

Sir Charles was in a dilemma. He had earlier accepted the invitation in anticipation that Dufferin would go and perform the installation ceremony. But the situation was considerably 'altered' when he came to know that the Viceroy would

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<sup>54</sup> NAI/FDP, Sec. E, June 1886, Cons. 7.

<sup>55</sup> IFP/2791, July 1886, Cons. 135. Sandeman is famous for his services on the North-West Frontier; negotiated Khelat treaty of 1876; was Governor-General's Agent in Baluchistan from 1877 to 1892.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, Cons. 150.

<sup>57</sup> Plowden, T.J.C. Before being transferred to Kashmir to officiate as Resident in St. John's place, Plowden was Resident of the Second Class and Commissioner of Ajmere. Subsequently he was transferred to Berar.

<sup>58</sup> IFP/2791, July 1886, Cons. 148.

<sup>59</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 1 June 1888, Cross Papers/24, No. 96.

<sup>60</sup> Maharaja to Aitchison, 11 April 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 529, encl. in No. 354, pp. 231-32.

<sup>61</sup> Aitchison to Wallace, 14 April 1886, *ibid.*, No. 354, p. 231.

not.<sup>62</sup> Aitchison was unwilling to go to Kashmir "in an undefined capacity", and if he were to perform the installation ceremony in the Viceroy's name, the position of the Resident might be misunderstood or weakened. Personally, he had no wish "to usurp the Resident's functions" or "to maintain old relations" with the Darbar, "which the Government of India wishes to see entirely severed".<sup>63</sup> He therefore requested Wallace<sup>64</sup> to send him a telegraphic 'yes' or 'no', so that he could decide accordingly.<sup>65</sup>

Aitchison was not permitted to go to Kashmir;<sup>66</sup> Plowden alone was asked to attend the Maharaja's installation which took place in the morning of 10 May. In the course of his address Pratap Singh referred to the reforms he had introduced, and profusely thanked Aitchison—in spite of his absence—for the trouble he had been taking to help him with the services of officers required to carry out the administrative reforms.<sup>67</sup> Evidently, Plowden did not like the Maharaja's tendency to lean on the Punjab Government, and before long, began to assert himself in an unmistakable way. In fact, the question of reorganising the Kashmir State, as Plowden understood it, fell under two heads. The appointment of a Resident introduced a new political system which envisaged a scheme of administrative reforms. St. John had hardly much time to bother about technicalities and decorum. During his brief tenure of office at the Kashmir Residency he was busy suggesting reforms, and carrying out the instructions of the Indian Government. But Plowden was eager to have his status and powers adequately defined, while he resolved to implement the programme of reforms as drawn up by the Government of India. He took

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<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* For the Maharaja's disappointment IFP/2783, June 1886, Cons. 94-95. Dufferin however assured Pratap Singh that he would not leave India without accepting the Maharaja's invitation to visit Kashmir.

<sup>63</sup> Aitchison, though he never interfered with Kashmir administration, was nevertheless not happy over this severance. Aitchison to Dufferin, 28 Sept. 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 528, pp. 254(a)-(b).

<sup>64</sup> Wallace, D.M., Dufferin's Private Secretary.

<sup>65</sup> Aitchison to Wallace, 14 April 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 529, No.354, p.231.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, No.362, p. 237.

<sup>67</sup> Report of the Kashmir Correspondent,, *Pioneer*, 12 May 1886, p.3.

up both simultaneously, and the effect of his impulse was first felt in the matter of the appointment of a judicial officer in Kashmir.

Besides an official to conduct survey and settlement operations, the Maharaja wished to have a good judicial officer for his state, and requested Aitchison to select a man for him. Sir Charles named two and asked the Maharaja to choose.<sup>68</sup> But Plowden took exception at the Maharaja's tendency to by-pass him. He urged the Punjab Governor that "the matter should stand over" until he had an opportunity of speaking to Pratap Singh. He was glad that the Maharaja had "asked for a Punjabi Officer and not for a Bengali", but before the appointment should be decided upon, he wanted to ascertain whether Pratap Singh had any definite scheme for judicial administration. He accordingly wrote to Gobind Sahai for a detailed statement of what the Darbar wanted to do, but had his rebuff when he was informed that the matter had been directly settled between the Punjab Government and the Darbar, and that none of the officers named by Aitchison had been found qualified to fill the appointment.<sup>69</sup>

Plowden was naturally exasperated, the more so because a Bengali, Rishibar Mukherjee, a brother of Nilambar, had been appointed Chief Justice of the *Sadr Adalat* at Jammu. As a matter of fact, the appointment about this time of a number of Bengalis in the Maharaja's service, presumably at Nilambar's suggestion, excited the jealousy of the Punjabi officials. The *Liberal* gave a whole list of the Bengalis employed by the state, while Aitchison hastened to write to Wallace that Kashmir was "rapidly becoming the happy hunting ground of Bengali Babus".<sup>70</sup> "The Babu Raj in Jammu", as Aitchison described it, was a matter of common talk among the people of the Punjab; he suspected that the Maharaja—a man with no force of character

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<sup>68</sup> D/O, Aitchison to Plowden, 12 May 1886, and 15 May 1886, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, Oct. 1886, Cons. 240 and 242.

<sup>69</sup> NAI/FDP, Sec.E, Oct. 1886, Cons. 241, and 244-46.

<sup>70</sup> Aitchison to Wallace, 16 June 1886 and enclosure, Dufferin Papers/Reel 529, pp. 464-65.

—was completely under the thumb of the Bengalis. Matters came to a head when Rishibar disobeyed an order from Amar Singh, as the latter “tried to invade the independence of the Judiciary”.<sup>71</sup> The prince complained to the Maharaja, but to no effect, so that he immediately withdrew all his support from the administration and prepared for a show-down.<sup>72</sup>

This gave Plowden the opportunity of taking up the question of the appointment of British subjects in the feudatory states. In a demi-official letter to Durand he emphasised that the time had come to lay down certain general principles which should govern the employment of British subjects by the Indian states, especially Kashmir. Action should be taken on the seventh article of the Treaty of Amritsar, and the Resident empowered to instruct the Kashmir Darbar “that no British subjects can be taken or retained in the Maharaja’s service except with the consent of the British Government”. Plowden even asked Durand to “issue such orders as may be necessary in respect to eliminating objectionable persons or placing a limit to their employ”. In his opinion, “the employment of Bengalis, unless they were Government servants, in the Native States was highly objectionable”; he agreed with Aitchison that the introduction of the Bengali element into Kashmir—especially the high position that Nilambar occupied—was causing great dissatisfaction!<sup>73</sup>

This was followed by an official despatch to the Government of India in which Plowden took up the question of the procedure that should govern the communications between the Kashmir Darbar and the Indian Government. He complained, and not without justice, that the direct correspondence that had recently passed between the Maharaja’s Government and that of the

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<sup>71</sup> From the Kashmir Correspondent, *Pioneer*, June 9, 1886, p.5. Rishibar was right in this matter. As N. S. reported later, on January 29, 1890, one of the worst judicial abuses in Kashmir was the Executive pressure brought to bear upon it “to decide cases at the sacrifice of conscience and fairplay”. PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 633-60.

<sup>72</sup> Report of the Kashmir Correspondent, June 1, 1886, *Pioneer*, June 9, 1886, p.5; also NAI/FDP, Sec.E, Oct, 1886, Cons. 238.

<sup>73</sup> D/O Plowden to Durand, 14 June 1886. NAI/FDP, Sec.E, Oct. 1886. Cons. 238.



Punjab was highly irregular; it was contrary to the orders of the Government of India, given in 1881 to the Punjab Government,<sup>74</sup> and confirmed and expanded by the confidential instructions of August 1884 and subsequent communications. He suspected that the Kashmir Darbar had no scheme of judicial reform, and was merely "actuated by a belief that by creating a few nominal appointments, and obtaining the loan of British officers to fill them, it will have gone far to satisfy the requirements of the Government of India as to administrative reforms." But he hoped that no employment of any British subject would be sanctioned, except in furtherance of a substantial scheme of reform and with a certain assurance that these officers would be allowed to carry out the duties for which they were lent. And inasmuch as the Government of India had declared it to be necessary that the administration of Pratap Singh must, for a time at least, be closely supervised, the Kashmir Darbar ought to make previous reference to the Resident in respect of all administrative changes they proposed to introduce.<sup>75</sup>

If Plowden met with a rebuff in the matter of the judicial appointment, he sufficiently avenged it by securing the appointment of a British official to conduct revenue survey and settlement operations in Kashmir. This matter had been before the Indian Foreign Office for quite some time, but on account of the sudden transfer of Colonel St. John and the Maharaja's pre-occupation with the installation ceremony no decision could be taken on the matter. Shortly before St. John left the Kashmir Residency, the Maharaja, with the Resident's approval, had approached Aitchison to find out a good Indian settlement officer for Kashmir. The Punjab Governor "took a good deal of personal trouble to select a first-rate man",<sup>76</sup> but before a decision could be reached Plowden intervened and made his weight felt. He suggested that "an English Settlement Officer should be appointed instead of a native", and to add strength.

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<sup>74</sup> Crawford, J., *Cashmere Precise*, p. 62, quoted in NAI/FDP, Sec.E., Oct. 1886, Cons. 239.

<sup>75</sup> Kashmir Resident to The Secy., Foreign Dept., Govt. of India, 17 June 1886, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, Oct. 1886, Cons. 239.

<sup>76</sup> Aitchison to Wallace, 16 June 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 529.pp.464-65.

to his representation to the Government of India, he sent them two petitions, signed by some seventeen or eighteen Muhammadans, all having interest in land, begging that an English settlement officer be appointed.<sup>77</sup> He also approached the Maharaja for the same purpose, but Pratap Singh objected on the ground that an English officer would not obey his orders, and that it would be difficult to get rid of him if he were found unfit for his job. When eventually he agreed to accept A. Wingate, he attached certain conditions to his appointment, the most important of which was

“that, with regard to matters connected with his work, the Settlement Officer should act entirely under the instructions of the Maharaja’s Government”.<sup>78</sup>

But Plowden had this clause modified in his own way : the settlement officer, though subordinate to the Maharaja and not to any officer of the Darbar, must above all be “subordinate in a general way to the Resident.”

Obviously, Plowden was going a little too fast to assert his own position. He thought he was giving effect to what he called Durand’s policy,<sup>79</sup> but the latter warned him to be more cautious in his dealings with the Darbar. Actually, Durand’s first concern was to bring the State of Kashmir in line with the other feudatory states of India ; in other words, he wished to establish the predominance of the Indian Government in such a manner that the Maharaja could have no illusion about his independence. He did not want the Government of the Punjab to have much to do with the Kashmir Prince<sup>80</sup> who should be left to the absolute care of the Government of India.

Meantime the situation at the court of the Maharaja had very much deteriorated, so much so, that a rumour got about

<sup>77</sup> NAI/FDP, Sec. E, Oct. 1886, Cons. 281-83; Bose, J.C., *op.cit.*, p.30.

<sup>78</sup> NAI/FDP, Sec. E, Oct. 1886, Cons. 289 and 291.

<sup>79</sup> Plowden to Durand, 8 August 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 530, pp. 130-33.

<sup>80</sup> Durand to Wallace, May 8, 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 533, No.547 p.462.

that there would soon be a change in the Ministry.<sup>81</sup> Pratap Singh, commonly regarded as a weak man,<sup>82</sup> was opposed to both his brothers, Ram Singh and Amar Singh, especially to the latter as he was the nucleus of a Darbar clique. What was worse, the Maharaja was under the influence of a number of his private servants—"Sawal Singh & Co.", as Plowden called them—who were at the bottom of much mischief. There was, indeed, an agreement of opinion among the high officials at the Court that these men were a positive hindrance to progress and should therefore be removed. Diwan Lachman Dass who in British official opinion, as also that of many others,<sup>83</sup> was by far the ablest man in Kashmir, was a "*persona ingratisissima*" to the Maharaja. He was opposed to both Gobind Sahai and Nilambar and looked upon them as his political rivals. As Plowden admitted, the ambition of Lachman Dass was to become the Prime Minister of the State of Kashmir.<sup>84</sup>

The pivot of the Gobind Sahai Ministry was Nilambar Mukherjee whose influence with the Maharaja made the Diwan very jealous of him.<sup>85</sup> Gobind Sahai, indeed, was taken very lightly by knowledgeable men ; all official correspondence was done by Nilambar, as the Diwan did not know English ; and on top of that, the finances were in Nilambar's control. The relations between the two were further embittered on account of another very important matter. At the time Gobind Sahai came to Calcutta to meet Lord Dufferin, he had brought with him a very large sum of money of which Rs. 65,000 were missing.

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<sup>81</sup> *Pioneer*, 31 July 1886, p.1.

<sup>82</sup> There was a consensus of opinion on this point. Not only did successive Viceroy and Kashmir Residents agree that Pratap Singh was very weak, and hence not likely to succeed as a ruler, his success depending upon his capacity to control diverse factions at the Court, but even Lady Dufferin, who had the occasion to see Pratap Singh once, formed a very unfavourable opinion of this prince. In fact, most observers who had the opportunity to see Pratap Singh from close quarters formed nearly the same opinion of him. For Lady Dufferin's opinion, *Our Viceregal Life in India* (London 1889), vol.I, p.120.

<sup>83</sup> Report of the Kashmir Correspondent, 13 Sept. 1885, *Englishman*, Sept. 23, 1885, also *Pioneer*, July 31, 1886, p. 1.

<sup>84</sup> Plowden to Durand, August 8, 1886. Dufferin Papers/Reel 530, pp.130-33 also encl. 18 in GI to SS, Oct.19, 1885, PSI.FI 45.

<sup>85</sup> Plowden to Durand, August 8, 1886. Dufferin Papers/Reel 530, pp.130-33 also *Civil and Military Gazette*, 13 Oct. 1886, p. 6.

Nilambar, as Finance Minister, asked for an account, but the Diwan failed to give any. This annoyed Nilambar as he apprehended that eventually he would be called upon to account for it. Admittedly, the Diwan was "a mere cypher", who was "detested by all parties alike, and shamelessly corrupt".

The growing coolness between Nilambar and Gobind Sahai was possibly the cause of a rumour about an impending change in the Kashmir administration, publicised by the *Pioneer*, but it was not known who among the two of the Maharaja's ministers would go. Nilambar's main support was the Maharaja himself, but here again the private servants stood between the two. Nilambar hated Sawal Singh and his partisans, and had for sometime been "trying conclusions" with them.<sup>86</sup> An open rupture between him and Sawal Singh was reported by the *Pioneer* on 31 July 1886. What was the outcome of this conflict the *Pioneer* could not definitely say, but there was a hint in the Correspondent's telegram that the Finance Minister had been worsted and had resigned, and that Lachman Dass had been sent for in his stead.<sup>87</sup>

That the account of the *Pioneer* correspondent was not very far from the truth is borne out by Plowden's testimony.<sup>88</sup> Although Lachman Dass had not yet been sent for by the Maharaja, his ambition, as Plowden admitted, was certainly to become the Prime Minister. At any rate, the state of affairs in the Kashmir Darbar was very much in disorder. Sawal Singh's opposition frightened Nilambar, and he hastened to effect a combination with Lachman Dass and the Maharaja's brothers in opposition to Sawal and the other private servants of Pratap Singh with whom Gobind Sahai had combined to bring about Nilambar's downfall. If, according to Plowden, the alliance of Nilambar with the Maharaja's brothers and Lachman Dass was "fortuitous", the house indeed, as Durand observed, was "divided against itself, and weak for resistance against necessary pressure." Durand therefore wished that Plowden should

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<sup>86</sup> Plowden to Durand, August 8, 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 530, pp. 130-33.

<sup>87</sup> *Pioneer*, 31 July 1886, p. 1.

<sup>88</sup> Plowden's report, 8 Aug. 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 530, pp. 130-33.

move carefully now in order "to get things well in hand".<sup>89</sup> The Resident of course had already moved to carry out what he understood to be Durand's policy. He had several interviews with Nilambar, Gobind Sahai and Lachman Dass in order to ascertain more fully the situation at the Kashmir Darbar and, as he said, to formulate a definite policy.<sup>90</sup>

From Nilambar Plowden gathered that Pratap Singh had contracted large debts during his father's lifetime, and that the Maharaja's acceptance had been forged to the tune of ten lacs of rupees. Pratap instructed Nilambar to settle these debts, and the latter agreed to do so if due consideration were shown in each instance. But his endeavours were defeated by Sawal Singh who secured the Maharaja's consent to settle them for over eight lacs. This amount was paid from the treasury, whereupon Nilambar tendered his resignation which however the Maharaja refused to accept. On the contrary, he gave Nilambar a *parwana* conferring on him full powers in all administrative matters, with leave to dismiss and appoint as he pleased. Nilambar refused to accept this without being sure beforehand of British support. He asked Plowden straightway if he could reckon upon this, but the latter assumed a stiff attitude and made him as uncomfortable as he could "by fixing personal responsibility upon him for everything" that was wrong in Kashmir. For instance, he blamed him for his conflict with the Maharaja's brothers as well as his appointment of Rishibar and other Bengalis. In short, Plowden tried "to induce him to stand by his resignation and leave the country". Personally, the Resident had made up his mind about the future of the Kashmir State. Though still willing to allow the Darbar "to work out its own salvation", he had decided that,

"sooner or later, the Babu, Gobind Sahai, and the private servants must be got rid of. If I can get the Babu to depart, even on leave, of his own accord, it will be a great gain. He must never come back".

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<sup>89</sup> Durand's note on Plowden's Report, 8 Aug. 1886, *ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> Plowden to Durand, August 15, 1886, NAI/FDP, Sec. E, Oct. 1886, Cons. 287.

It was indeed a conviction with Plowden that all the opposition the Maharaja offered to the British Government was due to Nilambar Mukherjee, and if this man could be removed, the Diwan would not be able to last.<sup>91</sup>

When Plowden met Gobind Sahai, the latter made his usual complaint that the loss of his power was due mainly to Nilambar's prominence, and as a remedy for the dual government, which his Ministry involved, he suggested three courses : first, the appointment of a single Diwan with real power ; secondly, the constitution of a Council ; and thirdly, the transaction of all business by the Maharaja himself. In Plowden's opinion, the last alternative could be dismissed without any consideration, while his objection to the first was that there was none at the Darbar fit for the appointment. The second alternative was preferred by both Plowden and Gobind Sahai, though from different motives, and they agreed that a Council with a President at its head would be the best arrangement in Kashmir.<sup>92</sup>

But if Gobind Sahai hoped that he would be made the President of the proposed Council, Plowden had Lachman Dass and the Maharaja's brothers in view for any transfer of power that might be necessary in the course of time. So when Lachman Dass came to see him, and expressed his anxiety to resign and retire to India, Plowden advised him "to stand fast" for some time, until matters were settled by the British Government. To the Resident it appeared that things were tending to the constitution of a Council, with Amar Singh as President, and Ram Singh as Military Member. As for the other members, Plowden suggested that two, or at the most three, of them would do, but in any case the Resident must be an "ex-officio" member for some time to come ; besides, it would be necessary to tell the Maharaja without any reservation that he could "only reign", while "the Council must govern". He was prepared to allow things to simmer for another month or so, but after that the situation must be "cleared up". In the meantime, it was

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<sup>91</sup> Plowden to Durand, 8 Aug. 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 530, pp.130-33.

<sup>92</sup> Plowden to Durand, August 15, 1886, NAI/FDP, Sec.E. Oct.1886, Cons. 287.

left to Durand to ascertain from Lord Dufferin whether such a Council was to be constituted or no.<sup>93</sup>

About this time Nilambar Mukherjee had a quarrel with Gobind Sahai, whereupon he again tendered his resignation. Although the Maharaja accepted it this time, Plowden was not sure whether Nilambar would persist in his resignation ; even if he did, he would do so in expectation of his speedy recall. But the Resident was determined that this should never be, for he looked upon "his departure from Kashmir as an essential preliminary to the accomplishment " of Durand's policy. Nilambar however did not withdraw his resignation, nor did the Maharaja insist on it. It was officially announced in the month of September, and Nilambar left Kashmir in a few days along with a few other Bengali officials who also resigned with him.<sup>94</sup>

The news of some impending change in the Kashmir administration which had been forecast from time to time by the *Pioneer* evoked a protest from the *Civil and Military Gazette*<sup>95</sup> which published, on the authority of the Maharaja, a statement that no such change was being contemplated, and that in spite of Nilambar's resignation Gobind Sahai would continue to administer in his original capacity. But the Jammu Correspondent of the *Pioneer* was so sure of his informant that he immediately proceeded to contradict the statement of the Lahore Paper. He asserted that he had it from the best authority "that the question of the immediate change of the Prime Minister has been recently forced upon the serious attention of the Maharaja", and that the rumoured change in the administration would come into operation after the meeting at Lahore between the Maharaja and Lord Dufferin<sup>96</sup> who was then touring the Native States.

That long-awaited meeting took place at Lahore on 4 November 1886. After the usual exchange of formal enquiries

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Pioneer*, Sept.22, 1886, p.1, *Englishman*, Sept.27, 1886, p.5. and Oct.2, 1886, p.4; J.C. Bose, *op.cit*, p.32.

<sup>95</sup> Oct.13, 1886, p. 1.

<sup>96</sup> *Pioneer*, October 21, 1886, p.4.

Lord Dufferin went straight into the question of reorganisation of the Kashmir administration, raised by the resignation of Nilambar Mukherjee. In Dufferin's opinion, Diwan Gobind Sahai was not "a fit and proper person to hold his present post"; hence he should at once be removed and the administration entrusted to a Council composed of Rajas Ram Singh and Amar Singh, and Diwan Lachman Dass. Pratap Singh struggled hard to retain Gobind Sahai in the new administration, if not as anything else, at least as a general adviser. But the Maharaja's request was set aside by the Viceroy on the ground that a coalition of political rivals would only impair the efficiency of the administration, and would lead to unnecessary friction and unpleasantness. He told the Maharaja that it was necessary for him to "construct at once a stable administration in which both his own people and the Government of India could have confidence."<sup>97</sup> At length Dufferin succeeded in persuading Pratap Singh "to change the personnel of his Ministry",<sup>98</sup> and the Kashmir prince went back pledged to send for Lachman Dass at once.

But Pratap Singh did not mean to keep his promise as easily as he had given it. The constitution of a new Council had to be deferred for some time owing to the serious illness of Maharani Pathani, one of the wives of Pratap Singh. She died early in January 1887, and when the mourning ceremony was over, Plowden took up the matter with his usual zeal. But the Maharaja, contrary to his promise, was reluctant to appoint a Council composed of his political adversaries, and fought for a day or two to postpone that unpleasant event. It was rumoured that he even conspired to put an end to Lachman Dass's life.<sup>99</sup> Whatever the truth in that rumour, it was not easy for him to escape from Plowden who prevailed upon him to send for Lachman Dass, and Rajas Ram Singh and Amar Singh. Pratap was reminded that if he should persist in his obstinacy and wilfully

<sup>97</sup> Memorandum of interview on Nov. 4, 1886, NAI/FDP, Sec.E., Dec. 1886 Cons. 73.

<sup>98</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 24 June 1887, Cross Papers/22, No. 47A.

<sup>99</sup> Plowden to Cunningham, 21 January 1887, NAI/FDP, Sec.E., March 1887, Cons. 46-48.



bide his time, it might be necessary to consider the alternative arrangement suggested by Lord Dufferin at Lahore, namely, that Raja Moti Singh of Punch would be sent for and the administration entrusted to him. This, as Plowden later observed, "worked like magic", as Moti Singh was known to be hostile to the ruling family.<sup>100</sup> Pratap Singh thereupon climbed down, accepted the suggested arrangement, and issued his *parwana*<sup>101</sup> appointing Lachman Dass as the President of the new Council and the Prime Minister of the state.

Lachman Dass was empowered to conduct the administration in consultation with Ram Singh and Amar Singh, subject of course to the law of the state. He was given the authority to appoint or dismiss all servants of the state whose salaries did not exceed 300 *chilki* rupees,<sup>102</sup> and also to decide all such issues "which need not be reported" to the Maharaja.

On the evening of the same day as the *parwana* was issued, a *khillat* was sent to Lachman Dass's house. But, as Plowden observed, the normal practice was to present the *khillat* in the Darbar, so that the Maharaja's act of sending it to the Diwan's house only demonstrated that he was not sincere in appointing the Lachman Dass Ministry. Yet, the Resident was disposed to believe that "the first step towards introducing a better condition of things" in the state had been taken, notwithstanding of course that it was still too premature to anticipate the ultimate result.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Plowden's Report, 5 March 1888, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, PSLEI/54, pp. 855-918.

<sup>101</sup> NAI/FDP, Sec.E, March 1887, Cons.46-48.

<sup>102</sup> *Chilki* rupee was equivalent to ten annas (British-Indian).

<sup>103</sup> Plowden to Cunningham, January 21, 1887, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, March 1887, 46-48.

## THE LACHMAN DASS MINISTRY 1887-88

On taking over charge of government, Diwan Lachman Dass and his colleagues began an examination of the actual condition of the state, both financial and otherwise. The finances particularly were in a bad state, and the Council therefore began to take stock of the state treasuries and attack useless expenditure. One of the primary tasks with which the new administration concerned itself was to demarcate the boundary between the legitimate public expenditure of the state and the private and personal disbursement of the Maharaja, and then to exclude his private servants from all interference in state affairs. Pratap Singh was alleged to have been a man of extravagant habits and under the influence of some of his private servants. The Council first placed a check on the Maharaja's extravagance by depriving him of his right to sign public bonds independently. Pressure was brought to bear on him to issue an order that "no bills would be cashed at the public treasury which were not countersigned by the Council, and that his own unsupported signature would be valid only against his private exchequer".<sup>1</sup>

If the Maharaja easily agreed to the curtailment of one of his prerogatives, he offered some resistance when the Council touched his private servants. One Miran Bakhsh was found guilty of having removed *pushmina* (wool) to the value of 84,000 rupees from the state store, and when the Council demanded his arrest Pratap Singh declined all redress.<sup>2</sup> This led to a minor crisis. The members of the Council resigned in a body and reported the matter to the Resident. Plowden advised withdrawal of their resignation on condition that the Maharaja should authorise Miran Bakhsh's arrest. Pratap temporised

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<sup>1</sup> Plowden to Cunningham, 14 Feb. 1887, NAI/FDP, Sec. E, March 1887, Cons. 46-48, D/O No.2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

for some time but eventually gave way, and Miran Bakhsh was promptly locked up. The case was thereupon made over to a commission with Rishibar Mukherjee at its head. Miran Bakhsh was found guilty and sent to seven years' imprisonment.

Pratap Singh went a step further to protect his chief private servant, Sawal Singh, when the Council proceeded against him. Early in March 1887 Lachman Dass reported to Plowden a complaint which had been made against Sawal Singh, and requested the Resident to advise him on the matter. Plowden did so, but the fact that the Council was going to act against Sawal got abroad. This led to an open rupture between the Maharaja and his Council. Pratap wrote two letters of complaint to the Viceroy and the Resident,<sup>3</sup> alleging that the Council had been acting like a Council of Regency and treating him like a minor ; that although he would "like very much to have a Council" to advise him, he was thoroughly dissatisfied with the present one.<sup>4</sup> The crisis was however temporarily resolved by the Resident's intervention. Plowden asked the Maharaja to arrange for a public Darbar in which he intended to deliver a *kharita*<sup>5</sup> from the Viceroy, received meanwhile from the Indian Foreign Office sanctioning the Maharaja's appointment of the Kashmir Council. In this Darbar Plowden succeeded in bringing about a reconciliation between the Maharaja and his new colleagues. He seriously exhorted the Diwan and the Maharaja's brothers to do their utmost to keep on friendly terms with Pratap Singh, and impressed upon them the expediency of mutual conciliation.<sup>6</sup>

About the same time the Lachman Dass Ministry undertook an enquiry into a case of defalcation by Diwan Gobind Sahai. As mentioned earlier,<sup>7</sup> a cause of quarrel between Gobind Sahai and Nilambar Mukherjee was a demand by the latter as Finance Minister that the Diwan should account for a sum of

<sup>3</sup> Plowden to Cunningham, 18 March 1887, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, April 1887, Cons.510-12, K.W.2.

<sup>4</sup> Maharaja to Plowden, 11 March 1887, (encl), *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Dated 28 Feb. 1887, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, March 1887, Cons.48.

<sup>6</sup> NAI/FDP, Sec.E, April 1887, Cons. 510-12, and K.W.2.

<sup>7</sup> *Supra*, Chap.II.

65,000 rupees paid to him during the Maharaja's visit to Calcutta in January 1886. This matter was pending when Lachman Dass and his colleagues took office. They pressed Gobind Sahai for an explanation ; accordingly, a Darbar was convened by Pratap Singh which was attended by both Gobind Sahai and the members of the Council. The Maharaja acknowledged responsibility for the expenditure of 5,000 rupees, and directed Gobind Sahai to account for the rest.<sup>8</sup>

Shortly afterwards, Gobind Sahai, pleading his daughter's illness, left for Aminabad, his home town in the Punjab. Here he received a notice from the Kashmir Council asking him to account for the missing sum. When the Diwan denied all knowledge of it, a case of criminal misappropriation was instituted against him. He was ordered to appear before the Council to stand trial ; but Gobind Sahai, on the advice of his legal counsel, C. H. Spitta, refused to do so. He explained that the President of the Council, Diwan Lachman Dass, was a bitter enemy of his ; no impartial investigation into his case could therefore be expected from the Council. He agreed, however, to submit himself to an enquiry by an independent commission or tribunal, if it should be conducted within British territory.<sup>9</sup>

Thereupon, the case was investigated by the Council in Gobind Sahai's absence. The depositions<sup>10</sup> of the witnesses who were examined by the Council proved beyond doubt that the alleged sum had really been paid to Gobind Sahai in two instalments at Calcutta and Benares, and that no account had ever been produced of how the money was spent. The Diwan was therefore declared guilty of misappropriation of state money : the Council decided that he should be fined to the amount of 40,000 rupees which, together with the sum misappropriated by him, ought to be realised from his property in the state. It was further decreed that for the future he would be prohibited

<sup>8</sup> NAI/FDP, Sec. E, June 1887, Cons.174-78; Plowden's Report, 5 March 1888, encl. I in GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, PSLEI/54, pp.855-918.

<sup>9</sup> Gobind Sahai to Wallace, 8 June 1887, PSDOC/2, First Series, pp. 254(a)-(d); Plowden to Durand, 29 April 1887, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, June 1887, Cons.171.

<sup>10</sup> NAI/FDP, Sec.E, June 1887, Cons.179-92.

from holding any appointment in Kashmir. The proceedings of the Council were submitted to the Maharaja for his approval which was readily obtained.<sup>11</sup>

In detecting defalcation of state money the Council of course had been very energetic, but when it came to the question of dealing with more important matters, Lachman Dass and his colleagues were found very badly wanting. One such matter was known as the "Bakidar question".<sup>12</sup> Large balances were entered in the public accounts as due to the state from officials of every rank, from merchants, shawl weavers, shopkeepers and cultivators, amounting in the aggregate to about three crores of rupees for Jammu and Kashmir. The peculiar indebtedness of the whole community to the state was a characteristic feature of the system of administration prevalent in Pratap's dominion.<sup>13</sup> Plowden advised the Council to take up genuine cases against men of substance really able to pay, and to investigate them fairly and openly. But the intention of the Council to deal with the *Bakidars* became known and at once rendered them unpopular. A principal *Bakidar* was a certain Mian Lal Din who had hitherto worked with the Council ; but their declared intention to deal with the *Bakidar* question made him hostile. He associated himself with other Muslims and led an opposition against the Council in Srinagar. Owing to this agitation, the Council made no progress in settling the *Bakidari* cases ; they were afraid to face the odium to which any general proceedings would inevitably give rise.<sup>14</sup>

More important than the *Bakidar* question was that of financial reform. For years past the finances of Jammu and Kashmir had been in a state of confusion, and the necessity of reducing chaos to order and of placing the income and expenditure of the country upon a sound footing was very pressing. Plowden

<sup>11</sup> Order of the State Council of 16 March 1887, *ibid.* Plowden to Durand, 29 April 1887, NAI/FDP, Sec.E., June 1887, Cons.171.

<sup>12</sup> "Bakidar" means debtor.

<sup>13</sup> Henvey's Report, May 15, 1880, encl. 2 in GI to SS, 7 April 1884, PSLEI/40, p.27; Plowden's Report, 5 March 1888, PSLEI/54, p.855.

<sup>14</sup> Plowden's Report, 5 March 1888, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 18 August 1888, PSLEI/54, pp.855-918.

took an early opportunity of drawing the attention of the Council to the question, whereupon they prepared two draft budgets for Kashmir and Jammu. These however were not worth even the paper on which they were written ; as Plowden observed, "the task was far beyond the administrative capacity of the Council."<sup>15</sup>

The estimated gross receipts of the two provinces of Kashmir and Jammu together with the outlying districts did not exceed 55 lakhs of rupees in British currency, but the actual collections fell considerably short of this amount. Out of the total revenue, 22 lakhs of rupees were spent on the army and connected services, leaving only 33 lakhs for all other purposes. Out of this balance, again, the Maharaja's Civil list alone absorbed  $8\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs, while departmental expenses were not always properly accounted for. Evidently, the situation was far from satisfactory, so that Plowden hastened to lay down his suggestions for the consideration of the Maharaja and his advisers. The result of his examination was recorded in two notes on the Kashmir and Jammu budgets which were sent to the Council without delay.<sup>16</sup>

Plowden observed that the financial condition of the Kashmir State was really "open to far more searching criticism" than his memoranda afforded. He therefore advised the Council to be more cautious in estimating the expenditure under different heads than they had hitherto been. As, owing to the important position of Kashmir as a frontier state, its military expenditure did not admit of any large reduction, Plowden asserted that the means to augment the revenue and effect an economy must be sought elsewhere. He suggested that, among others, the departmental expenditure should be subjected to a proper "system of check and control"; the Maharaja's revenue should be augmented by bringing waste lands under cultivation with the help of an improved system of irrigation ; detailed estimates should be made for expected receipts and expenditure of every description ; the salaries of the state officials, which were usually higher than in

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Sub-enclosures in Plowden's Report dated 5 March 1888, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, *ibid.*

other Native States, should be reasonably cut ; and even the Maharaja's Civil List ought to be reduced. In his opinion, the state should by all means aim at having a surplus, rather than a deficit, because,

“owing to particular conditions of the province of Kashmir, His Highness' Government is liable to be called upon to meet unforeseen expenditure for frontier defence and for famine.....Therefore, the estimates should be so framed as to leave a reasonable surplus, which I should fix at not less than four lacs or more than five lacs per annum.”<sup>17</sup>

But all this meant a task of “great labour and responsibility”, and required, in his opinion, a special officer. He recommended that the Maharaja should create an appointment of Accountant-General for Jammu and Kashmir, and “obtain from the British Government the services of a competent native officer for the post”. That was necessary, he felt, as the Council had not succeeded “in evolving order out of the existing confusion, and in obtaining adequate control over the finances”.<sup>18</sup>

If the Lachman Dass Ministry failed to tackle the financial problem of the state, in other directions they took several measures under the Resident's guidance to improve its condition.<sup>19</sup> As Plowden had desired, Wingate took up his appointment as settlement officer on January 15, 1887.<sup>20</sup> After only a month he was asked to undertake the settlement of the Jammu districts in addition to Kashmir. Before Wingate's arrival, during a series of years some portion of the valley of Kashmir had been measured. But the work had not been done in any systematic manner, so that the previous measurement had to be rejected, and a new system adopted. With the assistance of Lala Narsing Das and four other officers, lent by the Punjab Government,

<sup>17</sup> Sub-encl. 1 to encl. 1 in GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Plowden's Report, 5 March 1888, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, PSLEI/54, p.855.

<sup>19</sup> *Civil and Military Gazette*, 14 April 1887, Editorial entitled “Kashmir and its new Minister”, p.2.

<sup>20</sup> NAI/FDP, Sec.E, Oct.1886, Cons.291.

Wingate began his work at Jammu in April 1887, and completed within a year the preliminaries of the settlement work of both Kashmir and Jammu. The whole undertaking cost a total sum of Rs. 35,048.<sup>21</sup>

A preliminary survey for a railway into Kashmir was also completed at the expense of the Darbar. From the first Plowden had been urging the Maharaja and his Council to stiffen the administration by obtaining the loan of competent officers from the British Government. The ground had been prepared for such an appointment when the services of Colonel (afterwards Major-General) R. de Bourbel of the Royal Engineers were transferred in May 1886 for employment in connection with the construction of a railway to Kashmir.<sup>22</sup> For a whole year Bourbel was engaged in surveying for a Kashmir Railway.<sup>23</sup> Shortly before his retirement from British service, Plowden secured his employment by the Darbar as Chief Engineer in charge of the Public Works Department. As Plowden observed,

“The object which the Darbar has in view in engaging Col. de Bourbel is to enable that officer to supervise the existing expenditure, to prepare a scheme of important public works to be gradually accomplished in a series of years, and to organise a Public Works Department with an adequate system of check and control.”<sup>24</sup>

Personally, he hoped that the fact that, in addition to the revenue settlement, the Darbar was now willing “to entrust an important spending department to an English Officer”, would be considered by the Government of India a satisfactory proof that the Maharaja’s Government was “really in earnest in its endeavours to set its house in order”!

<sup>21</sup> Preliminary Report by Wingate, 1 Aug. 1888, encl. in GI to SS, 26 July 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), pp.923-72; PFP/2923, Native States B, April 1887, Cons.16 & 126-27.

<sup>22</sup> Encl. in GI to SS, 25 Oct.1886, PSLEI/48, p.765; IFP/2791, Nov.1886, p.19.

<sup>23</sup> De Bourbel’s General Report, IFP/3738, Feb.1890, Cons.307-308.

<sup>24</sup> Plowden to Government of India, 26 March 1887, IFP/3036, August 1887, Cons.156.



Side by side, the provision of funds for the Kashmir cart-road was placed on a satisfactory basis. The budget allotment for this road was Rs. 30,000 (British currency) per month, and the Maharaja made no difficulties in regularly supplying this promised sum. As a result, there was a marked progress in the work of construction, and in April 1887 the road was opened for wheeled traffic as far as Garhi. As Plowden claimed, during the two years ending in April 1888, the work done on this road "more than equalled the work of the previous five years". At a total cost of about seven lakhs a length of 35 miles between Kohala and Garhi was completed, 16 miles from Garhi onwards was partially constructed, and an additional length of 26 miles from Baramula towards Uri was cut to formation.<sup>25</sup>

While the cart-road was making good progress, the Darbar had taken another important step in improving the communications between Kashmir and India. In August 1887, Lachman Dass made a proposal for the construction of a railway line from Sialkot to Jammu.<sup>26</sup> The measure, now proposed, had been sanctioned by the Government of India early in 1885, but soon a difficulty arose over the question of financing the project. No satisfactory arrangement could be arrived at by the Indian Government with Ranbir Singh, with the result that the whole scheme had to be kept in cold storage for the time being.<sup>27</sup> When the question was revived, however, a different proposal was made by the Darbar. The railway line was to be called the Jammu and Kashmir State Railway, and was to be constructed by the Darbar through its Chief Engineer, Col. de Bourbel. The necessary capital would be provided by the state, but the Government of India would pay interest at the rate of 4% on the capital expenditure on the British section of the line.<sup>28</sup> The terms were convenient for the Indian Government, and the railway was considered "desirable on political and commercial

<sup>25</sup> Bourbel's Report, July 1888, IFP/3501, Feb. 1889, Cons. 69.

<sup>26</sup> Lachman Dass to Plowden, 4 Aug. 1887, IFP/3278, March 1888, Cons. 586A. The railway was to begin from the terminus of the Sialkot branch of the North-Western Railway.

<sup>27</sup> GI to SS, 14 Feb. 1888, *ibid.*, Cons. 591.

<sup>28</sup> Lachman Dass to Plowden, 4 Aug. 1887, IFP/3278, March 1888, Cons. 586A.

grounds".<sup>29</sup> After the preliminary discussions were over an agreement was concluded with the Kashmir Darbar on 4 July 1888.<sup>30</sup>

The Medical Departments of Kashmir were for long in need of able supervision, but financial difficulties of the state had hitherto stood in the way. In October 1887, the Maharaja made a suggestion which proved to be of great help to the state without imposing upon it much financial obligation. The Resident was requested to lend the services of Surgeon-Major Deane of the British Residency for supervising the Medical Departments in his spare time on a monthly allowance of Rs.250. The matter was quickly settled, and Deane was appointed to superintend the Medical Departments of the Kashmir State.<sup>31</sup> During his year of office he did some really good work. Although all the evils from which the Kashmir and Jammu hospitals had hitherto suffered could not be removed, Major Deane "made a good beginning" in the right direction.<sup>32</sup> He systematised the medical expenditure of the state, and was thereby enabled both to augment the number of medical institutions and to extend the sphere of usefulness of those already existing. This was done without any additional outlay in the case of Jammu, and in Kashmir with a budget grant reduced by Rs. 10,000 (*Chilki*). He took measures to substitute qualified for non-qualified hospital assistants in charge of minor dispensaries, and to supply them with necessary instruments and a stock of suitable drugs. Finally, he drew up and set to work a scheme for educating a certain number of boys in the Lahore Medical School for the purpose of rendering them fit to take charge of dispensaries in their own country.<sup>33</sup>

Meanwhile, Diwan Gobind Sahai had gone far enough in his efforts to reverse the verdict of the Kashmir Council against him. In June he had written to Lord Lytton, complaining

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<sup>29</sup> GI to SS, 14 Feb. 1888, *ibid.*, Cons.591.

<sup>30</sup> IFP/3280, August 1888, Cons.94.

<sup>31</sup> IFP/3275, January 1888, Cons. 42-44.

<sup>32</sup> Plowden to GI, 12 Nov.1888, IFP/3501, January 1889, Cons.116.

<sup>33</sup> Report of Surgeon-Major Deane, 14 Oct.1888, *ibid.*, Cons.117.

against the proceedings of the Council.<sup>34</sup> Perhaps he did so in expectation that Lord Lytton would take up his case in England and secure his reinstatement. However, this was followed by an appeal to the Viceroy for a re-hearing of his case. He complained that the charge of embezzlement against him had been built up at the machinations of Diwan Lachman Dass who had a long-standing enmity with him "in connection with the division of their family estate". Besides, the Council had exceeded its functions by arrogating to itself judicial powers which, he said, were beyond its legitimate jurisdiction; therefore the verdict given by it was *ultra vires*. He submitted a petition for Lord Dufferin's consideration, urging the Viceroy to intervene on his behalf and save him from this persecution.<sup>35</sup> But the Government of India refused to interfere, and after proper enquiry, regretted their inability to accede to his request.<sup>36</sup> Not only that, Gobind Sahai's name, as Plowden had desired,<sup>37</sup> was struck off the Viceregal Levee List, and the Punjab Government was duly informed that in future the Diwan would not be admitted to interviews with the Governor-General.<sup>38</sup>

As a matter of fact, Lord Dufferin had come to form a very poor impression of Gobind Sahai, both as a man and an administrator, and he had even a shrewd suspicion that the money embezzled by the Diwan might have been sent to Dalip Singh, the Sikh prince, to enable him to regain his hold over the Punjab.<sup>39</sup> About this time rumours were afloat that the Kashmir State was intriguing with both Dalip Singh and Russia against the Indian Government.<sup>40</sup> There were men who even believed that Dalip would settle in Kashmir.<sup>41</sup> In fact, since the close of 1885, his movements had been very closely watched by the Punjab

<sup>34</sup> Lytton to Dufferin, 10 July 1887, Dufferin Papers/Reel 526, p.200(b)

<sup>35</sup> Memorial of Gobind Sahai, dated 22 August 1887, NAI/FDP, Sec.E. Dec.1887, Cons.63.

<sup>36</sup> Cunningham to Gobind Sahai, 14 Oct.1887, *ibid.*, Cons.73.

<sup>37</sup> Plowden to Durand, 2 Sept.1887, *ibid.*, Cons.67.

<sup>38</sup> PFP/3163, Native States, Part B, April 1888, Cons.27.

<sup>39</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 24 June 1887, Dufferin Papers/Reel 518, p.158.

<sup>40</sup> Maitland to Mackenzie Wallace, 18 March 1887, Dufferin Papers/Reel 526, encl. in No. 64, pp. 75-76; Dufferin to Mackenzie Wallace, 10 January 1886, *ibid.*/Reel 525, p.9; Tel. from Viceroy, 21 Jan. 1886, PSLEI/50, p.883.

<sup>41</sup> Summary of correspondence in the case of Dalip Singh by Col.P.D. Henderson, 13 June 1887, PSLEI/50, pp. 1505-09.

Government. Dalip went to Russia early in 1887 and began to intrigue with the Czar in the vain hope of securing Russian aid to invade India.<sup>42</sup> Lord Cross was very anxious to know the truth or otherwise of the Maharaja's complicity with Dalip Singh. He felt very much concerned about the "disloyal proceedings" of the Punjab prince about whom all sorts of rumours were then in the air. The Lahore Press even reported that mendicants were going about in the Punjab, foretelling the restoration of the Khalsa power. In consequence, Cross asked Dufferin to impress upon Aitchison the necessity of strict vigilance in the Punjab,<sup>43</sup> and Roberts was urged to keep his eyes upon the Sikh section of the Indian army.<sup>44</sup> Henderson,<sup>45</sup> Durand and Aitchison did not believe that the Maharaja of Kashmir had anything to do with Dalip Singh. But Dufferin preferred to reserve his opinion; in the absence of any documentary evidence it was, to his mind, "one of those circumstances which must always remain a matter of conjecture".<sup>46</sup>

In fact, the Government of India had never discounted the possibility of a Russian invasion of India, or of an attempt by Dalip Singh with Russia's aid to reconquer the Punjab.<sup>47</sup> Early in 1887, Durand had drawn the attention of the Government of India to the close proximity of the Russians to the Indian frontier, and suggested the advisability of some kind of preparedness to meet any contingency. He was particularly in favour of organising the armies of the Indian States, so that they could be utilised as a valuable reserve in time of war.<sup>48</sup> Personally, Lord Dufferin was not inclined to accept such a proposal; yet, the matter could not be long delayed.<sup>49</sup> Shortly afterwards, Durand

<sup>42</sup> Dufferin to Roberts, 12 Feb. 1887, Roberts Papers/Box File D/2, No. R27/68; Dalip Singh to Lala Jhindaram, 1 May 1887, encl. in No. 788, Dufferin Papers/Reel 531, pp.611-12. Lala Jhindaram was a pleader of Multan.

<sup>43</sup> SS to Viceroy, 1 Feb. 1887, Cross Papers/33, Feb. 1887, No. 6.

<sup>44</sup> Tel. from Viceroy, 1 June 1887, PSHC/95, p.727; Dufferin to Roberts, 12 Feb. 1887, Roberts Papers/Box File D2, No. R.27/68.

<sup>45</sup> Note by Henderson, 1 July 1888, PSLEI/54, pp.663-67; Dufferin to Cross, 22 July 1887, Cross Papers/23, encl. 2 in No. 51. Henderson was the head of the Thuggee and Dacoity Department.

<sup>46</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 24 June 1887, Dufferin Papers/Reel 518, p.158.

<sup>47</sup> Dufferin to Roberts, 19 July 1887, Roberts Papers/Box File D2, R27/96.

<sup>48</sup> Memo, by H.M. Durand, 21 Jan. 1887, PSM, D.S., Sec. 5. P. *Sir Mortimer Durand*, (London 1926), p.172.

<sup>49</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 22 Feb. 1887, Dufferin Papers/Reel 518, pp.20-21.

repeated his argument for reorganising the native armies; he believed that this would especially prove to be

“a political advantage just now when Dalip Singh is appealing to the sympathies of his countrymen”.<sup>50</sup>

He therefore proposed that a separate beginning should be immediately made with the armies of the Punjab States and Kashmir called upon to supply a Dogra contingent.<sup>51</sup> He further advised that Major Melliss of the Bombay Staff Corps should be appointed on special duty for a couple of months to secure all possible information about the Native States in general, and to submit a scheme for dealing with their military resources.

Roberts agreed with Durand that to prepare for resisting a Russian invasion of India the princely states like Kashmir might be called upon to lend their assistance.<sup>52</sup> A Mobilisation Committee was thereupon set up with Roberts, Chesney<sup>53</sup> and a few others, and Lord Dufferin agreed with their general deliberations that any

“further advance of Russia could not fail to create a situation of great political and financial embarrassment in India and should be opposed at all hazards.”<sup>54</sup>

Durand's proposal for raising some Dogra troops was separately considered. Dufferin's Government was at first hesitant to sanction the formation of a Dogra regiment. But Roberts urged upon them the desirability of such a contingent

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<sup>50</sup> Durand's Note on the organisation of the Native States Armies, 7 Aug. 1887, Roberts Papers/Box File D1/4, R26/6; Memo. on the present position in C. Asia, 21 May 1887, Cross Papers/22, encl. in No.43.

<sup>51</sup> Durand's Memo. of 21 May 1887, PSM/C104.

<sup>52</sup> Roberts' note on Military Preparation, 23 May 1887, Roberts Papers/96/1, pp.175-77.

<sup>53</sup> Sir George Chesney, General in the Indian Army; Secretary to the Military Department of the Government of India, 1880-86; Member of the Governor-General's Council, 1886-91; M.P. for Oxford, 1892.

<sup>54</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 24 Sept. 1887, Cross Papers/23. No. 60; Black C.E.D. *The Marquess of Dufferin & Ava* (London 1903), pp.279-80.

on political grounds.<sup>55</sup> The matter assumed considerable importance when Dufferin asked for the permission of the Home Government to confer an Honorary Colonelship upon the Kashmir Maharaja for that purpose. To such a proposal Lord Cross raised "no objection on political grounds", but he apprehended that it might form "an inconvenient precedent in respect to other chiefs".

"Is it worth doing merely to help recruiting in one Corps?"

he asked, but subsequently left the matter to the Viceroy for a final decision.<sup>56</sup> Eventually, Dufferin decided in favour of a Dogra contingent, and the Maharaja was appointed an Honorary Colonel of his new regiment, the 37th Dogras.<sup>57</sup>

About this time, an offer came from the Nizam of a sum of 20 lacs of rupees as a contribution towards the defence of the Indian frontier.<sup>58</sup> Dalip Singh might have been cut to the quick by the Nizam's offer,<sup>59</sup> but its announcement led other chiefs to follow the example set by Hyderabad, and some of them came forward with similar offers.<sup>60</sup> The Maharaja of Kashmir offered a sum of one million rupees in addition to all the troops and war materials of the state.<sup>61</sup> Lord Dufferin still questioned the prudence of accepting these offers, the more so because Indian opinion, as expressed in the Indian Press, was generally opposed to the arrangement. At least, he said, the "Government should have the appearance of acting with deliberation, rather than of any over eagerness".<sup>62</sup> But his colleagues supported Durand's idea of taking some definite measure for utilising the native armies. Most of them, of

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<sup>55</sup> Roberts to Chesney, 19 April 1887, Roberts Papers/100/5, p.189.

<sup>56</sup> SS to Viceroy, 4 Aug.1887, PSHC/96, p.1389.

<sup>57</sup> IFP/3276, July 1888, Cons.26-27, p.31.

<sup>58</sup> Viceroy to SS, 4 Oct. 1887, PSHC/98, p.295, PSHC/97, p.831.

<sup>59</sup> Dalip Singh to Nizam, 30 Oct.1887, encl. in No. 565, Dufferin Papers/Reel 532, pp.433-34.

<sup>60</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 24 January 1888, encl. in No. 24, Cross Papers/24; Viceroy to SS, 27 Oct. 1887, Cross Papers/33, No.26.

<sup>61</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 26 Jan. 1888, Cross Papers/24, No.82.

<sup>62</sup> Viceroy to SS, 29 Oct.1887, Cross Papers/33, Oct.1887, No.31.

course, disfavoured the proposed money payment by the Indian princes, but there was a consensus as to the utility of reorganising their armies for employment in case of a war with Russia.<sup>63</sup> The rights and obligations of the Paramount Power in relation to the Native States were put very tersely by Aitchison :

“The duty of subordinate cooperation in the defence of the Empire is one which flows necessarily from the relations of supremacy which we have established over the Native States of India and the obligation we are under to protect the Native States as part of the Empire.”<sup>64</sup>

Dufferin, however, believed that the collateral question which his colleagues had incidentally raised as to converting the proposed money payment into a contribution of troops was one that must be gone into more fully. He therefore instructed Major Melliss, as Durand had desired, to visit the Native States to ascertain whether the offers of the Indian princes could be fruitfully utilised for the purposes of defence. Personally, Dufferin still had “very grave doubts” about the advisability of the proposed measure, “and, even if adopted, its practical accomplishment”.<sup>65</sup> The delay in deciding upon the matter gave rise to questions in the British Parliament,<sup>66</sup> and Cross asked for a categorical answer from the Viceroy as to his intentions.<sup>67</sup> But Dufferin was opposed to any hasty decision; he preferred to wait till Melliss had gone round the Native States, including Kashmir, and submitted his report for the Viceroy’s consideration.<sup>68</sup>

In the meantime, signs of discord had become manifest in the affairs of the Kashmir Darbar. The *entente cordiale* between

<sup>63</sup> Notes by the Members of the Viceroy’s Council, encl. in No. 24, Cross Papers/24.

<sup>64</sup> Note by Aitchison, 16 January 1888, encl. in No. 77, Dufferin to Cross, 24 January 1888, Cross Papers/24.

<sup>65</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 3 Aug. 1888, Cross Papers/25, No. 105.

<sup>66</sup> Hansard, Third Series, Vol. 323, 19 March 1888, Col. 1616.

<sup>67</sup> Tel. from SS, 19 March 1888, PSHC/100, p. 1025.

<sup>68</sup> GI to SS, 17 April 1888, PSLEI/53, p. 295.

the Maharaja's brothers and Diwan Lachman Dass had ceased to exist. Raja Amar Singh, in particular, became hostile to the Diwan and aspired to become the Prime Minister himself. The Maharaja sided with his brothers, evidently to get rid of Diwan Lachman Dass whom he had never wanted as his Prime Minister. The net result of this internecine conflict was that the Darbar became "a scene of indolence and intrigues". Rumours, not without foundation, were rife of neglect of state business and of scenes of debauchery. The Maharaja still continued to be under the influence of his worthless parasites. Measures of reform which were proposed and adopted were rarely carried out in the proper manner.<sup>69</sup> Worst of all, the burden of expenditure, entailed upon the state exchequer on account of the reforming zeal of the Resident and the Council, had made the state completely bankrupt, so much so that in the beginning of March 1888, Amar Singh disclosed it to Plowden "that at the moment the total sum in the public treasuries was only Rs. 800".<sup>70</sup>

Even Plowden admitted that the Lachman Dass Ministry was now a spent force. In his opinion, it was now time "for the Government of India to reconsider the entire situation". The question, he emphasised, was what form of Government should now be constituted, and whether the policy of 1884 of allowing the Maharaja a free hand should still be continued. Personally, he believed that a drastic reduction of the Maharaja's authority was an essential preliminary to any form of government in the Kashmir State. Pratap Singh might reign but must not govern : that was the demand made by him;<sup>71</sup> and starting from this

<sup>69</sup> Plowden's Report, 5 March 1888, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, PSLEI/54, p.855; Lachman Dass to Plowden, 18 March 1888, sub-encl. in encl. 2 to GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, *ibid.*; *Pioneer*, 26 January 1888, p.6.

<sup>70</sup> Plowden to Durand, 23 March 1888, encl.2 in GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, PSLEI/54, p.855.

<sup>71</sup> Col. P. D. Henderson, Head of the Thuggee and Dacoity Department, however, thought that the grounds assigned by Plowden for setting aside Pratap Singh were rather inadequate. He believed that there was very little against the Maharaja that was definite except that he was weak, superstitious, liable to be influenced by inferiors, and generally not favourable to reforms. Pratap Singh, he observed, was in a difficult position right from the beginning, for which his father, Ranbir Singh, was largely responsible, and stated that with sympathetic guidance he would make a fair ruler. Note by Cunningham, 21 Dec. 1889, PSDOC/3, First Series, pp.811-51.



premise he proceeded to discuss his alternative plans for the reconstitution of the Kashmir Government. One of these, he believed, the Government of India would be obliged to choose in view of the failure of the Lachman Dass Ministry.

The first plan was to appoint Raja Amar Singh as Prime Minister. This idea had gained credence in many quarters, especially due to the recent rapprochement between the Maharaja and his brother.<sup>72</sup> But Plowden was avowedly opposed to it. He had great doubts whether the young prince could be safely employed without prejudice to the interests of the Indian Government, and he asserted that the recent reconciliation between the Maharaja and Amar Singh was not genuine, being solely motivated by their common desire to overthrow Lachman Dass. The next plan was to bring in a Prime Minister from elsewhere, but the selection, in Plowden's opinion, would need particular care. No Indian official could administer the affairs of Jammu and Kashmir unless he was not only of exceptionally strong character, but also exceptionally honest ; in any case he would require the full support of the Indian Government. Plowden's third plan was to continue the existing Council, making the Resident its temporary head and strengthening it by the addition of two selected Indians. He believed that an administration so constituted would probably be strong enough to introduce all needful reforms and to set the country in order. Three years would suffice to set things straight, and the Resident might then withdraw from the headship of the Council, and an administration be established on ordinary lines as obtained in other feudatory states.<sup>73</sup>

Whatever plan might be adopted by the Government of India, Plowden was sure that there was "one measure which must under any circumstances be prescribed." That was, first, the immediate removal of the band of incompetent, corrupt and mischievous men who were at the bottom of most of the

<sup>72</sup> *Pioneer*, 11 Feb. 1888, p. 6; *Civil and Military Gazette*, 26 March 1888, p. 3.

<sup>73</sup> Plowden's Report, 5 March 1888, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 18 August 1888, PSLEI/54, p. 855.

intrigues in the state; and secondly, the appointment of an adequate number of trained Indian officials on reasonable salaries who could be trusted to carry out the orders given to them. In thus recommending a complete reconstitution of the Kashmir Government, Plowden endeavoured to anticipate an objection which, he foresaw, was likely to be raised—that of interference in the affairs of an Indian state. Notwithstanding, he argued, that the British Government was pledged not to interfere with the internal affairs of a princely state, a clear case of unavoidable interference had occurred in Kashmir. First, because misgovernment producing evil consequences to the people had existed for many years, and though a wide margin of time and opportunity had been allowed, there seemed no hope whatever that the state, unaided, would be able to settle its own affairs. Secondly, the condition of Kashmir affected countries on its northern border beyond its limits, and thus became an injurious and disturbing element in the scheme of frontier defence. He came to the conclusion that a strict adherence to the principle of non-interference would merely prolong “the local disorder and maladministration” in Kashmir, and therefore to check its mischievous course, decided and effectual interference had become a necessity.<sup>74</sup>

That Lachman Dass had failed to fulfil the obligations of his high office was generally recognised,<sup>75</sup> and in an open Darbar, summoned on March 19, 1888, Pratap Singh declared his intention to dismiss the Diwan from his office of Prime Minister and President of the State Council. The decision was communicated both to the Resident and the Diwan on the same day, and the causes assigned were the Minister's failure to discharge his duties satisfactorily and control the expenditure of the state which had exceeded income, leaving the civil and military establishments in arrears of pay. Ram Singh did not approve of the measure, while Lachman Dass appealed to the Resident to save him from his discomfiture. The Maharaja

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<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Pioneer*, 26 January 1888, p.6; 11 Feb. 1888, p.6; March 21, 1888, p. 1; March 22, 1888, p.1. *Civil and Military Gazette*, 26 March 1888, p.3.

at first entrusted the duties of the President to the joint charge of his brothers, Ram Singh and Amar Singh, but subsequently, perhaps on account of the disapproval with which Ram Singh appeared to have viewed the whole business, the state seal was made over to Raja Amar Singh alone.<sup>76</sup>

Following Lachman Dass's appeal to him, Plowden took up his case with the Government of India. On the same day as the Darbar had been held Pratap Singh had sent a communication to the Viceroy stating his reasons for the removal of the Diwan, much in the same terms as he had done to the Resident.<sup>77</sup> But Plowden tried to answer the Maharaja's charges by attributing the bankruptcy of the state to its military expenditure,<sup>78</sup> and to the personal expenditure of the Maharaja and his two brothers. He argued that the dismissal of Lachman Dass was due not to the causes alleged by the Maharaja, but to that perpetual intrigue at the Darbar which was the bane of the Kashmir State. He urged the Government of India to consider whether the reasons assigned by the Maharaja for the dismissal of the Diwan were adequate and just, and the Maharaja's proceedings, even if just in themselves, had been consistent with the respect due to the paramount power.<sup>79</sup>

That Plowden would be annoyed at the sudden dismissal of Lachman Dass is understandable, but Durand, too, considered the Maharaja's action without previous consultations with the Indian Government to be absolutely improper.<sup>80</sup> The Anglo-Indian Press felt a sympathy for the fallen Minister and sought

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<sup>76</sup> Plowden to India, 20 March 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 533, p. 278; Plowden to Durand, 23 March 1888, encl.2 in GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, and its sub-encls., PSLEI/54, p.855.

<sup>77</sup> Pratap Singh to Dufferin, 19 March 1888, sub-encl. in encl. 2 to GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, *ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Earlier Plowden had assumed that the military expenditure of the state did not admit of any reduction. *Supra*, p.55. The bankruptcy of the state was due considerably to a loan of Rs. 25 lakhs taken about this time by the Indian Government from the Maharaja. Plowden's Report, 5 March 1888, PSLEI/54, p. 855; Bose, J.C. *op. cit.*, p.69.

<sup>79</sup> Plowden to Durand, 23 March 1888, encl.2 in GI to SS of 18 August 1888, PSLEI/54, pp.855-918.

<sup>80</sup> Durand to Plowden, 22 March 1888, sub-encl. in encl.3 to GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, *ibid.*

to cover up his personal failings by suggesting that he was practically helpless being under the absolute control of the Resident.<sup>81</sup> On the whole, the Press opinion had gone against Plowden, and much of the failure of the Lachman Dass Ministry was ascribed to him. He was charged with having interfered too much in the affairs of the state, "both small and great"; he was accused of having exercised his authority in an undue measure. The *Pioneer* went to the length of suggesting that if Lachman Dass were to be removed from his office on account of his failure, the Resident ought to be removed as well.<sup>82</sup> Partisans of the Diwan, however, fondly hoped, as perhaps did Plowden himself, that the Viceroy would intervene on behalf of Lachman Dass and ask the Maharaja to state "openly and fairly what he has to urge against his Minister.....The final result of all this will be the retirement of the Maharaja from business, which will have to be carried on by a Council of Regency."<sup>83</sup> To such expectations Dufferin's speech at the Town Hall, Calcutta, on March 23, acted as a fine rejoinder. His deprecation of any desire to interfere unduly with the methods and concerns of Indian states was so hearty and explicit "as to suggest the idea that the Viceroy had in his mind the absurd rumours recently spread in connection with Kashmir."<sup>84</sup>

This became apparent shortly afterwards. Dufferin had earlier accepted an invitation from the Maharaja to visit Kashmir in the spring. But he was obliged to give up his trip,<sup>85</sup> and this is how he described his reaction to Lord Cross :

"For some reasons I was glad, for others sorry. I was sorry not so much on account of missing a sight of that wondrous valley, as because I am not satisfied with the condition of public affairs in the State. We have tried Agent after Agent there, and none of them had done well. The

<sup>81</sup> *Pioneer*, March 21, 1888, p.1.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, March 21, 1888, p.1, and March 22, 1888, p.1.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, March 23, 1888, p.1.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 March 1888, p.1.

<sup>85</sup> Dufferin to Roberts, 9 April 1888, Roberts Papers/Box File D3 No. R27/159.

fact is our politicals are a very poor lot. They are either lazy or stupid, or vulgar-minded bullies, or disreputable or amiable gentlemen, devoid of any real grasp or energy."<sup>86</sup>

Presumably, Plowden was not aware of Lord Dufferin's personal opinion of him; he was not deterred by the Press criticisms of his high-handedness either. His representation to the Government of India in favour of Lachman Dass was soon followed up by further accusations against the Maharaja. Toward the end of March he sent to the Foreign Department a copy of a paper, complaining of the Maharaja and signed by the two young Rajas, Ram Singh and Amar Singh, and by three Kashmir officials, Diwan Lachman Dass, Wazir Shib Saran, and the notorious Mian Lal Din. This paper, as Plowden said, had been given him while Lachman Dass was in office, but he had deliberately withheld it at the time since Pratap Singh had promised to work in collaboration with Lachman Dass and his colleagues, and the earlier disagreement between the Maharaja and his Council had been smoothed over.<sup>87</sup>

Pratap Singh, however, had made up his mind to thoroughly recast his own Government, and with that end in view, he again sent for Nilambar Mukherjee from Calcutta. But Plowden was determined not to allow Nilambar to re-enter the Kashmir territories, and as soon as he learnt of the Maharaja's intention, he sent a telegram to Nilambar asking him not to come to Kashmir without the sanction of the Government of India. Plowden believed that Nilambar's re-engagement without the previous consent of the Indian Government would be contrary to the treaty of Amritsar. Accordingly, he asked Durand to send a cable to the Government of the Punjab to stop Nilambar at Sialkot, and to send at the same time a strong warning to Pratap Singh.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 16 April 1888, Cross Papers/24, No. 89.

<sup>87</sup> Plowden to Durand, 28 March 1888, encl. 3 and sub-enclosures in GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, PSLEI/54, p.855.

<sup>88</sup> Resident to India, 30 March 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 533, No.398. p.304.

Durand agreed with Plowden that the Maharaja's action in re-employing Nilambar Mukherjee was contrary to treaty stipulations and therefore wrong. All the same, he apprehended that the refusal to admit him to the Maharaja's territories would be criticised in Bengal. So, instead of stopping Nilambar at Sialkot, he decided that the Resident should tell the Maharaja, in the Viceroy's name, that in view of the serious condition of affairs in his state Pratap must not make any arrangement for employing Nilambar or any other British subject, until the Viceroy had had an opportunity of considering the Maharaja's proposals for the future conduct of the Kashmir administration.<sup>89</sup>

Plowden was informed accordingly, but before he moved in the matter, Pratap Singh had drawn up a scheme for reorganising his administration and sent it to Lord Dufferin for his consideration. The new scheme proposed the appointment of a Council, a consultative one, composed of a President, a Vice-President, three Members, and a Secretary. The Maharaja chose himself to be the President of the new Council. The right of appointing the Vice-President, Members, and the Secretary was reserved by Pratap Singh, while the power to remove and substitute them was vested in the majority in the Council. Raja Amar Singh was appointed Vice-President, who was also to be the Prime Minister with executive power. Ram Singh and Nilambar Mukherjee were appointed as Members, with Diwan Janki Prasad as Member and Secretary. Amar Singh was entrusted with the judicial and foreign departments; the charge of military administration was assigned to Ram Singh; Nilambar Mukherjee was given the charge of the revenue department; while Diwan Janki Prasad was charged with 'miscellaneous' functions.<sup>90</sup>

If Plowden was anxious that the Indian Government should effectually interfere in the affairs of Kashmir, Durand appre-

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<sup>89</sup> Durand to Wallace, 31 March 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 533, No.398, p.304.

<sup>90</sup> Maharaja's *Kharita* of 13 April 1888, sub-encl. in encl. 4 to GI to SS, 18 Aug.1888, PSLEI/54, p.855.

hended "a possible onslaught" from the Punjab Government.<sup>91</sup> Recently, he had received a complaint from Plowden about Nisbet's meddlesomeness in Kashmir affairs.<sup>92</sup> Although he did not personally believe that Nisbet would intrigue against Plowden,<sup>93</sup> Durand was aware of Aitchison's view that the Government of the Punjab alone could "manage Cashmere", and that the rest were "all wrong".<sup>94</sup> This, of course, Durand was reluctant to admit, and in spite of his confidence in Nisbet, the Maharaja continued to send his representatives to Rawalpindi. Not long after, Nisbet himself expressed his desire to Wallace to replace Plowden as Resident in Kashmir.<sup>95</sup>

Meanwhile, Plowden had communicated to the Maharaja that no step should be taken to appoint Babu Nilambar Mukherjee till the Government of India should have examined the scheme of reorganisation of the Kashmir administration. But the Maharaja claimed that according to article VII of the Persian version of the treaty of Amritsar, which alone was signed by his grandfather, Maharaja Gulab Singh, he was entitled to appoint any British subject without the consent of the Indian Government. He argued that a person was only bound by a document to which he was a party ; since his grandfather had never signed the English version of the treaty of Amritsar he, as Gulab's successor, was not bound by its stipulations. Pratap knew, however, that the matter was a complicated one and therefore left it to the Government of India for final decision.<sup>96</sup>

The Maharaja's arguments evoked a very smart rejoinder from Plowden which was submitted to Durand for the consideration of Lord Dufferin's Government. In this Plowden pointed out the fallacy, even the danger, in Pratap Singh's con-

<sup>91</sup> Durand to Wallace, 8 May 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 533, No.547, p.462.

<sup>92</sup> Plowden to Durand, 5 May 1888, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, May 1888, Cons.286. One Karamchand reported to Plowden from Rawalpindi that Nisbet, then Commissioner at that place, was receiving representatives of the Maharaja, suggesting that he sympathised with the Darbar against Plowden. *ibid.*, Cons.287.

<sup>93</sup> Durand to Plowden, 11 May 1888, *ibid.*, Cons.288.

<sup>94</sup> Durand to Wallace, 8 May 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 533, p.462.

<sup>95</sup> Nisbet to Wallace, 3 July 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 533, pp.4-5.

<sup>96</sup> Maharaja to Plowden, 24 April and 8 May 1888, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, March 1889, Cons. 157 and 160.

tention. He argued that if the State of Kashmir was bound only by the Persian version of the treaty, by the same reasoning the British Government was obliged only to respect its English text, in accordance with which the Government of India had hitherto recognised the Maharaja's existence as a ruling chief. In other words, the repudiation by Pratap Singh of the English text of the treaty would at once mean, from the British point of view, the forfeiture of his right to continue as the ruler of Kashmir. The question of Nilambar's appointment thus became a complicated one, and no immediate decision could therefore be given on it.<sup>97</sup>

However much Plowden tried to resettle the affairs of the Darbar, Lord Dufferin was never very happy about the way he did so. In a letter to the Queen he expressed almost the same feeling as he had to Lord Cross only five weeks before. Notwithstanding that "some very considerable reforms have been carried through in Cashmere", he observed, referring to the services of both St. John and Plowden :

"The fact is the political service in India is anything but well-furnished, and the worst of it is that owing to its peculiar constitution, if a member of it falls short of what the Government has a right to expect, the only remedy is to remove him from one post to another, for as he is a member of a covenanted service, he cannot be got rid of unless he is guilty of marked misconduct."<sup>98</sup>

And only a week after this he informed Cross of his decision to remove Plowden. He recognised Plowden's ability as a man, but considered that "he has been too *zubberdust*, in other words, too highhanded in his dealings with Maharaja". Dufferin complained that Plowden had "identified himself beyond what was desirable with the direct administration of the State", and so decided to transfer him to Berar where a vacancy had been created by the accidental death of Leslie Saunders. Plowden

<sup>97</sup> Plowden to Durand, 12 May 1888, *ibid.*, Cons.159.

<sup>98</sup> Dufferin to the Queen, 24 May 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 516, No.98.



was to be replaced in Kashmir by Colonel Trevor who was then Commissioner at Ajmere.<sup>99</sup>

At this turn of events Colonel Nisbet plunged headlong into the vortex of Kashmir politics. To Wallace he expressed a wish for the Kashmir appointment, and professed a great deal of interest for the welfare of the state. He claimed that he had had more to do with the State of Kashmir than any other officer of the Punjab, and even frankly acknowledged that the Maharaja and his brothers had often applied to him for coming to their assistance. Nisbet was of course aware that his "rather severe personal rule" had made him unpopular with the Indian Press. Even so, he hoped that he "might be able to exercise a useful personal influence in the direction of affairs" in Kashmir.<sup>100</sup>

Meanwhile, the Maharaja had again applied to Plowden asking that Nilambar Mukherjee be allowed to take service under the Darbar. The appointment, he said, was to be made as a provisional arrangement and without prejudice to his treaty rights.<sup>101</sup> By the phrase "provisional arrangement" the Maharaja meant, as Plowden rightly remarked, not to employ Nilambar temporarily; he hoped that eventually the Government of India would agree to his keeping Nilambar permanently. Plowden had already sent the previous correspondence of the Maharaja on this subject for consideration of the Government of India. The matter was taken up by Lord Dufferin's Government along with the Maharaja's scheme for the reconstitution of the Kashmir Council, and their decision was communicated to Pratap Singh towards the end of July.

The Government of India declined to permit the employment of Nilambar Mukherjee as Member of the Council in charge of the revenue administration. Plowden was informed that if the Maharaja should raise the question of employing him in any other capacity, he was to be told that the Government of India did not

<sup>99</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 1 June 1888, Cross Papers/24, No.96.

<sup>100</sup> Nisbet to Wallace, July 3, 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 533, No.5, pp.4-5.

<sup>101</sup> Maharaja to Resident, 22 June 1888, sub-encl. in encl. 8 to GI to SS, 18 Aug.1888, PSLEI/54, pp. 855-918.

"consider it desirable that the Babu should return to Kashmir". As regards the question whether the Maharaja was at liberty to employ British subjects without the consent of the Indian Government, Plowden was asked to tell him that the interpretation of the treaty of 1846 with regard to this point was no longer open to discussion. The Government of India was willing to give the Maharaja every possible assistance in regard to such appointments, "but they must maintain their right to be consulted" before any British subjects were appointed by the Darbar.<sup>102</sup>

If Dufferin refused to sanction the appointment of Nilambar Mukherjee, he accepted the Maharaja's scheme of reorganisation in its major aspects. Of course, the Government of India apprehended that the scheme might not work to their satisfaction, "partly on account of Pratap Singh's personal character, and partly for other reasons." Yet, they set aside for the time being the alternative proposals made by Plowden, and decided to afford the Maharaja a further opportunity of showing whether he was capable of discharging the duties of a responsible ruler. But they pointed out at the same time that if after a fair trial it should become evident that the Maharaja was wholly incapable of conducting the administration of his state, the proposals submitted by the Resident would be reconsidered.<sup>103</sup>

In particular, Dufferin impressed upon the Maharaja the supreme need for a careful investigation into the condition of his finances, and also for reorganising the executive and judicial services of the state. To secure that end, the Maharaja was asked to employ competent officials with practical experience of administration for all the three branches ; the Viceroy assured him of all possible help in securing the services of such men from the Punjab or elsewhere.<sup>104</sup>

Dufferin might or might not have been hopeful about the new administration, but men at the India Office had serious

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<sup>102</sup> Government of India to Kashmir Resident, 25 July 1888, encl. 9 in GI to SS, 18 Aug. 1888, PSLEI/54, pp.855-918.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> Viceroy's *Kharita*, 25 July 1888, sub-enclosure in encl. 9 to GI to SS, 18 August 1888, *ibid.*

reservations about it. Cross was cynical of its prospects, though he recognised that the time was not ripe for "any radical change". Admittedly the official attitude was "to try Pratap Singh to the last", so that if it should

"become necessary hereafter to remove the Maharaja as incapable of ruling his State, it will not be possible to charge the Indian Government with acting in an arbitrary manner or without having given the Maharaja every chance of showing that he possessed the will and capacity to govern his Kingdom wisely."<sup>105</sup>

At a private interview with Pratap Singh, Plowden communicated to him the instructions of the Government of India, embodied in the *kharita* from the Viceroy. A few days later he had another opportunity of discussing the *kharita* with the Maharaja and Amar Singh. On this occasion he urged upon Pratap's attention the desire of the Viceroy that the finances as well as the judicial and executive services of the state should be immediately reorganised. But Plowden suspected that the Maharaja could not adequately appreciate the necessity of balancing the income and expenditure of the state, and was possessed by the idea that, as the land revenue formed the principal source of income, nothing much could be done till the new settlement was concluded.<sup>106</sup>

The Viceroy's *kharita* however inspired the Maharaja to action. He made certain modifications in respect of the composition of his Council. The number of its members was raised to seven to keep it, as the Maharaja explained, "uneven for the majority of votes". He appointed Diwan Amar Nath as a member who was placed in charge of the *nizamat* department. He asked Lord Dufferin for the services of two experienced Indian officials for the judicial and revenue departments, and

<sup>105</sup> SS to GI, 12 Oct. 1888, and accompanying minute, n.d. PSDI/14, pp. 55(a)-60.

<sup>106</sup> Plowden to Durand, 21 Sept. 1888, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, March 1889, Cons.177.

desired that these officials should be from the Punjab and not from other provinces.<sup>107</sup>

Dufferin's approval of the Maharaja's scheme of reorganisation was a decided check upon Plowden's initiative. That however did not deter him from recording a note of dissent against the appointment of Diwan Amar Nath. This young member of the Diwan family was a brother of Anant Ram. He was appointed Secretary of the Council in Diwan Lachman Dass's administration, but having quarrelled with the other members, he could not remain in office for long. He was dismissed from the service of the state, and since then had held no appointment under the Darbar. Plowden did not entertain a very favourable opinion of the young Diwan. He did not approve of his appointment by the Maharaja, and even complained that, since the Diwan was a British subject, Pratap Singh ought to have sought the permission of the Government of India before employing him. Even so, in view of his recent instructions from the Foreign Department not to unnecessarily meddle in the affairs of the Maharaja, Plowden refrained from asking them to withhold their sanction in respect of Amar Nath's appointment. He merely suggested that it could "be withdrawn hereafter if (the Diwan's) proceedings should render this course advisable".<sup>108</sup>

This was the last of Plowden's recommendations to the Government of India as Resident of Kashmir. Thereafter his days at the Residency were numbered, since Dufferin had decided to replace him by Colonel Parry Nisbet, the Commissioner of Rawalpindi.<sup>109</sup> Durand of course was opposed to Nisbet's appointment. He complained to Wallace that the Kashmir Darbar had always tried to play off the Punjab Government against the Resident, and Nisbet's appointment would merely encourage them to believe that they were in future to be restored to the charge of the Punjab officials, if not of the Punjab Govern-

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<sup>107</sup> Maharaja to Dufferin, 16 Sept. 1888, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, March 1889, Cons.178.

<sup>108</sup> Plowden to Durand, 21 Sept. 1888, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, March 1889, Cons.177.

<sup>109</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 24 Sept. 1888, Cross Papers/25, No.112.

ment. He pointed out that it was quite a mistake to suppose that the state was in a worse position than it was before:

"On the whole, things have greatly improved since the old Chief's death. The Darbar is inefficient, like almost all Native Darbars, but it is now manageable, which it was not before, and progress has been made in many ways."<sup>110</sup>

Whether Durand liked it or no, the Viceroy was favourably impressed by Nisbet's abilities as an administrator. He thought that Nisbet was the right type of man to guide the Maharaja, if the latter was to be kept in power :

"...unless we are able to place by his side as Resident an officer whom he likes and trusts, and who will in some measure supply him with the strength and courage which he lacks, the result of leaving H.H. in possession of full administrative powers may be precisely what we wish to avoid."<sup>111</sup>

Dufferin even wrote to Cross with the idea of temporarily raising the salary of the Kashmir Resident which was then 2,000 rupees a month, and 750 rupees short of what Nisbet was drawing as Commissioner of Rawalpindi.<sup>112</sup> Officially, of course, Dufferin asked Nisbet to accept the post at its lower salary, and formally apologized for introducing "these pounds, shillings and pence considerations".<sup>113</sup> Nisbet "demurred very strongly at first, but subsequently gave way".<sup>114</sup> With his appointment began a new chapter of Kashmir history, and Lord Dufferin hoped

"that our new man in Cashmere will put everything to rights in that most important corner of the world."<sup>115</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Durand to Wallace, 5 Sept. 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 533, pp.174-75.

<sup>111</sup> GI to SS, 15 Oct.1888, PSDOC/2, First Series, pp.1131-32.

<sup>112</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 24 Sept. 1888, Cross Papers/25, No.112.

<sup>113</sup> Dufferin to Nisbet, 1 Oct.1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 534, No.229.

<sup>114</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 4 Nov.1888, Cross Papers/25, No. 117; Viceroy to SS, 5 Nov.1888, Cross Papers/34, No.11.

<sup>115</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 3 Dec. 1888, Cross Papers/25, No.121.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUPERSESSION OF PRATAP SINGH 1889-90

In November 1888, Plowden was transferred to Berar as Commissioner of the Hyderabad Assigned Districts;<sup>1</sup> on the 13th of the same month Colonel Parry Nisbet assumed the charge of the Kashmir Residency.<sup>2</sup> The new Resident was given "a hearty reception" by Pratap Singh, and after the first ceremonies were over, Nisbet arranged a few private interviews with the Maharaja and Amar Singh in order to acquaint himself with the affairs of the state. His first impression of Pratap Singh was favourable, as he wrote to Dufferin :

"The Maharaja is not the least wanting in intelligence; far from it, being very shrewd in all his remarks, and he can reason and argue with much force and good sense."<sup>3</sup>

In his first official meetings with the Maharaja, Nisbet took up the military question. Pratap Singh had agreed on the occasion of Melliss's visit to Kashmir in August 1888 to thoroughly equip and train a force of 2,500 for the purpose of Imperial defence.<sup>4</sup> That offer was now renewed with equal enthusiasm, and the Maharaja even asked for the services of eight Drill Inspectors from the British army to commence work on that portion of his forces which he had consented to make thoroughly efficient.<sup>5</sup>

Nisbet settled down to his work with "every hope of doing all" that was wished of him. The Maharaja and his brothers

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<sup>1</sup> Notification by the G.I., 12 Nov. 1888, IFP/3508, Feb. 1889, Cons.3

<sup>2</sup> Memo., 13 Nov. 1888, *ibid.*, Cons. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Nisbet to Dufferin, 8 December 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 534, No. 656.

<sup>4</sup> Maharaja to Durand, 1 Sept. 1888, encl. 7 in GI to SS, 13 March 1889, Lansdowne Papers/TR(i), p. 403.

<sup>5</sup> Nisbet to Dufferin, 8 Dec. 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 534, pp. 472-73.

were very cordial and eager for reforms.<sup>6</sup> Pratap Singh's first request was for the supply of pure water for Jammu, whereupon Nisbet called a Committee of Engineers which adopted a suitable project for that purpose.<sup>7</sup> With the help of Major Melliss and Algernon Durand the training of the Kashmir troops was set on foot, and Nisbet hoped that Major Drummond and Captain Hogge would make the best use of the Kashmir army. The New Resident was, however, very much dissatisfied with the Public Works Department under General de Bourbel. He complained to Durand that Bourbel was very slow, expensive and pompous, and that the railway to Jammu and the cart-road from Srinagar to Kohala had made very slow progress, and that too at a very heavy expenditure. The same sloth and extravagance, he further alleged, possessed the Maharaja's Engineer, Atkinson, with the result that the Jhelum Valley road had made no progress whatever. Nisbet however took up both the matters and prepared himself to cleanse the Public Works Department.

The Maharaja had meanwhile expressed a strong wish to meet the new Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, which seemed to Nisbet a very desirable proposal deserving of every encouragement :

"I am satisfied that he only wants drawing out of his shell and being brought out of the background into which he had fallen of late to be both useful and compliant."<sup>8</sup>

That apart, such an interview would, he believed, 'amazingly' assist in the settlement of frontier questions and other matters. He wrote to Durand to enquire if the Viceroy could have time to arrange a meeting with the Maharaja, and suggested that if that course should not be feasible, he himself could come down

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<sup>6</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 12 January 1889, NAI/FDP, External B, April 1889, Cons. 27/33, K.W.2.

<sup>7</sup> Report on the Lansdowne Water Works by J.S. Attfield, 28 Sept. 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>8</sup> Nisbet to, Durand, 12 January 1889, NAI/FDP, External B, April 1889 Cons. 27/33, K.W.2.

to Calcutta with Raja Amar Singh. Nisbet seemed to be in earnest in his effort to establish an intimate relation between the Darbar and the Government of India ; he even asked Durand to come up to Kashmir with his wife, assuring him that such a trip would help in the settlement of various matters which otherwise "would have a year's correspondence".<sup>9</sup>

No meeting could be arranged between the Viceroy and the Maharaja as Lord Lansdowne was then busy with people from two other States—Hyderabad and Jaipur. That also kept Durand busy, so that Nisbet was asked to come to Calcutta with Raja Amar Singh if he should consider that desirable. Just when telegraphic communications between Sialkot and Calcutta were thus crossing each other, an incident occurred which radically changed the entire course of events in Kashmir. On 25 February 1889, a batch of 34 letters,<sup>10</sup> written in the Dogri character and alleged to be in the Maharaja's own handwriting, fell in the hands of Nisbet. Some of them disclosed the Maharaja's intrigues with Russia and Dalip Singh ; others brought to light several offers of large sums of money to certain individuals for removing by death or otherwise such men as Plowden, the erstwhile Resident, the two brothers of the Maharaja, and one of his Maharanis.

Personally, Nisbet had no doubt about the authenticity of these letters which was vouched for by Raja Amar Singh ! Immediately as they fell in his hands Nisbet came to the conclusion that though the Maharaja had his "lucid intervals of good sense and propriety", he was "utterly incapable of being left in charge of his own affairs"; that, indeed, there was no other course open "save his removal from the State" ! He therefore urged the Foreign Department to permit him to come to Calcutta at once to talk the matter fully over with Durand, so that the future policy of the Government of India towards the Kashmir State could be definitely settled.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 21 Feb. 1889, NAI/FDP, External B, April 1889 Cons. 27/33, K.W.3.

<sup>10</sup> Sub-encl. in encl. 8 in GI to SS, 3 April 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), pp. 535-37.

<sup>11</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 27 Feb. 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB (i), pp. 519-20, G : KT—6



Durand received the Resident's communication with mixed feelings. He appreciated that the matter was one which could not be thoroughly ignored. But at the same time he was aware that Amar Singh "always wanted to oust the Maharaja of Kashmir". He evidently doubted the authenticity of the treasonable correspondence ; at any rate, it was a nuisance and he felt that,

"if we had to remove the Maharaja, we should have to wash a great deal of dirty linen in public."<sup>12</sup>

When the matter was submitted to Lord Lansdowne he instructed that Nisbet should first hold a full enquiry into the matter and then come to Simla to present his case.<sup>13</sup> But the Resident, in no mood to wait for any further investigation, urged Durand to take his word for it that the letters discovered were undoubtedly genuine. He of course admitted that the matter was brought to light by the two brothers of the Maharaja, but notwithstanding their intrigues against their ruler, the letters, he argued, certainly established the "absolute incapacity" of Pratap Singh who should therefore be deprived of all powers ! Instead, the administration should be entrusted to a Council, composed of the Maharaja's brothers and other members approved by the Government of India.<sup>14</sup>

Nisbet then hastened to Jammu and had two interviews with Pratap Singh on 7 and 8 March. In both these meetings the Maharaja was reported to have urged upon the Resident his desire to retire from public life, entrusting the administration to a Council which should include the Resident himself. Nisbet knew this was not feasible and proposed instead the inclusion of an English member. This measure, he believed, would ensure freedom from intrigue and continuity of the Kashmir administration.<sup>15</sup> Shortly after Nisbet's second interview with the

<sup>12</sup> Durand to Wallace, 3 March 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(a), p.190.  
<sup>13</sup> India to Resident, 4 March 1889, encl. 2 in G1 to SS, 3 April 1889. Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), p. 520.

<sup>14</sup> Resident to India, 5 March 1889, encl. 3 in *ibid.*, pp. 520-21.

<sup>15</sup> Nisbet's Report on Kashmir, 16 March 1889, encl. 8 in G1 to SS, 3 April 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), p. 520.

Maharaja, Amar Singh brought the Resident an edict of renunciation from Pratap Singh in which the latter declared his intention to retire from public life for a period of five years, and authorised a Council of five members to conduct the administration of the state during that period. Of these five members, two were his brothers, Rajas Ram Singh and Amar Singh ; a third was an English member selected by the Government of India ; and the two others were Pandits Suraj Kaul and Bhag Ram. The Maharaja pledged himself not to interfere with the administration during this period of five years, but retained for himself the right to draw a monthly allowance for his privy purse and to make all the usual expenses relating to marriages and other family customs. Besides, he retained the privilege of nominating one of his brothers as President of the Council. Finally, the Council would have no power to alter the existing treaties without the previous consent of the Maharaja, or to assign *jagirs* or immovable property of the state.<sup>16</sup>

In Nisbet's opinion, the resignation of the Maharaja afforded an acceptable way out of "a very acute difficulty" created by the discovery of his 'treasonable' correspondence.<sup>17</sup> Of course, he was not inclined to exaggerate the importance of the letters, and regarded them "as the foolish and mischievous invention of a weak and ill-balanced mind". Nisbet believed that Pratap Singh was a man of no strength of character or intellect, though as a man he was "not entirely bad". His fault was that he was placed in a position for which he was disqualified by natural character, education and intellect. All the same, it was dangerous to leave the affairs of the state in his hands, because a foolish ruler like him could, by his acts, plunge the Government of India at any moment into unforeseen difficulties. So the time had come when the Government of India could hardly ignore the imperative necessity of directly interfering into the affairs of Kashmir. With this assumption, Nisbet proceeded, just as Plowden had done, to suggest the remedies which would

<sup>16</sup> Maharaja's *Irshad* (edict) dated 8 March 1889, sub-encl. in encl. 7 in GI to SS, 3 April 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), pp. 521-23.

<sup>17</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 13 March 1889, encl. 7 in GI to SS, 3 April 1889, *ibid.*

relieve the state of its present deplorable condition of utter mismanagement.<sup>18</sup>

Nisbet's first remedy was the appointment of a British official as a member of the State Council ; the alternative proposal was to appoint the Resident also the Superintendent of the state. Nisbet of course claimed that he himself would prefer the first alternative, but whatever the measure adopted, he emphasised that it must be complete in itself and not a half measure. Personally, he was satisfied that only a rigorous action on the part of the Government of India could provide for the proper administration and future security of the Kashmir State.<sup>19</sup>

Meanwhile, Nisbet had been asked to come to Calcutta for a discussion with the Foreign Department. He had made an unnecessary fuss over the discovery of the Maharaja's letters. The news leaked out and obtained a wide circulation.<sup>20</sup> Questions were asked in the House of Commons,<sup>21</sup> and both Lansdowne and Durand were annoyed on that account. The Viceroy felt that Nisbet had made "a needless commotion about the letters";<sup>22</sup> Durand thought that no officer "who had seen anything of the Native States would have attached so much importance to them as Colonel Nisbet has done". In fact, he believed that the appointment of Nisbet as the Resident in Kashmir had been a "dangerous experiment". For the Viceroy's consideration, therefore, Durand wrote :

"His [Nisbet's] sense of right and wrong is often too acute, and his energy explosive. Colonel Nisbet should, I think, be restrained."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Nisbet's Report on Kashmir, 16 March 1889, encl. 8 in *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Wallace to Knight, Editor, *Statesman*, March 11, 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(a), p. 125 ; *Pioneer*, 11 March 1889, p.1.

<sup>21</sup> Hansard, Third Series, Vol. 333, March 14, 1889, Col. 1635.

<sup>22</sup> Lansdowne to Roberts, 30 March 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(a), pp. 153-54.

<sup>23</sup> Durand's note dated 16 March 1889, on Nisbet's Report on Kashmir, dated 16 March 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E, April 1889, Cons. 80-98, K.W.1. Evidently, Nisbet personally submitted his report at Calcutta.

However, he agreed with the Resident that the letters, if genuine, were very discreditable to the Maharaja and afforded good evidence of his unfitness to rule. But he disapproved of Nisbet's suggestion for an English member on the Kashmir Council. That measure would have "the appearance of annexing Kashmir", and a disastrous effect upon the confidence and loyalty of the other feudatory states. The Government of India should take steps similar to those recently taken in Gwalior, maintaining the existing Council under the presidency of Raja Amar Singh, with the reservation that they must consult the Resident on all matters of importance and must follow his advice whenever offered. As to the exact grounds upon which the action of the Government of India should be based, Durand was rather hesitant. He, however, advised the Viceroy that it would be better not to base it upon the Maharaja's letters exclusively, nor even on his voluntary resignation, but to take cognisance of both and say that in order to relieve the state of the existing misgovernment, the Maharaja should, for a time at least, hand over his powers to the State Council.<sup>24</sup>

Lansdowne, like Durand, attached little importance to the Maharaja's letters, but believed, all the same, that their discovery betrayed his "incapacity to govern his State".<sup>25</sup> He, however, was anxious to avoid creating the impression that he intended to annex Kashmir. He recognised that the affairs of the state were very much in confusion, from which there was no possibility of any immediate relief under the 'incorrigible' Maharaja, and therefore the "episode of the letters" should be made the occasion for a radical change in the state, though not its main justification. But the whole change should be made as quietly and unostentatiously as possible, so that it might not appear as though the Maharaja was being publicly degraded.<sup>26</sup> As regards Pratap Singh's proposals for the future administration of the country, he agreed with Durand that it would be inadvisable to allow an English officer to serve upon the new Council, and

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 20 March 1889, Cross Papers/26, No. 16.

<sup>26</sup> Lansdowne to Roberts, 30 March 1889, Roberts Papers/Box File LI, R34/18.

whatever the measures taken they should be adopted on grounds of protracted misgovernment in the state.<sup>27</sup>

Nisbet was accordingly advised to communicate to the Maharaja that for a time at least he would be expected to refrain from all interference in the administration. He would retain his rank and dignity as Chief of the State, but full powers of government would be vested in a Council composed of the Maharaja's brothers and three or four officials selected by the Government of India. It was considered undesirable to include an Englishman among the members of the new Council, and Raja Amar Singh was nominated its new President. Besides retaining his rank and dignity the Maharaja would receive from the revenues of the state an annual sum sufficient to maintain his household in due comfort and to defray any expenditure which might rightly devolve upon him. But he would have no power of alienating the state revenues, and the money placed at his disposal for private expenses, though adequate, must not be extravagantly large. As for the Council, it would have full powers of administration, but these powers were to be exercised only under the guidance of the British Resident. They would take no important step without consulting him and follow his advice whenever it might be offered.<sup>28</sup>

In communicating the decision of the Government of India, Nisbet was asked to be careful to avoid basing that decision exclusively upon the Maharaja's resignation or upon the discovery of his seditious letters. But they were by no means prepared to make the settlement a matter of compact with the Maharaja, and to accept all the conditions laid down in his edict of resignation. Nisbet was therefore asked to tell the Maharaja that the decision of the Government of India was based upon a full consideration of all the circumstances, the letters as well as the Maharaja's abdication being considered among other things, but only as portions of a difficult and complicated case, "which

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<sup>27</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 20 March 1889, Cross Papers/26, No. 16.

<sup>28</sup> India to Resident, 26 March 1889 and 1 April 1889, encls. 10 and 14 in GI to SS, 3 April 1889, Lansdowne Papers/1B(i), pp. 539-40.

it had been necessary to settle on broader grounds of general policy".<sup>29</sup>

To Amar Singh's appointment as the President of the State Council, as laid down in the instructions of the Government of India, Nisbet could not heartily agree. He was still doubtful about the capacity and industry of that young prince, and on political grounds recommended that the question of appointing a permanent President could be kept open for some time. He pointed out that if Ram Singh should be passed over in favour of his younger brother, he would never attend the Council meetings. On the other hand, if he were appointed the permanent President of the Council, he would, being a man of curious disposition, create all sorts of difficulties. So the best course for the time being would be to announce that "the senior member present at the commencement of the sitting will preside". Nisbet thought that the two brothers ought merely be allowed to retain their "present designations", Ram Singh as Commander-in-Chief, and Amar Singh as Prime Minister ; and when they and the other members should sit together in Council, they would fall into their natural places, each with an equal vote.<sup>30</sup>

On the question of the Council meetings, Nisbet was not in favour of "very frequent" ones : once or twice a week, he thought, would be enough. He expressed his preparedness to work in collaboration with all the departments of the State Government, making each member of the Council bring his particular work to him, if necessary daily. Thus he hoped to settle himself every administrative problem and ensure the regular progress of the work of the State Council. Though uncertain of Ram Singh's attitude, Nisbet was eager to keep the ruling family together ; on his personal behalf he assured Durand that he would certainly work quietly and with circumspection as the Government of India wanted him to do. He emphasised at the same time that

"the trumpet should give no uncertain sound, and  
with my knowledge of native character, if the

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 29 March 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec.E, May 1889, Cons. 556.

policy is strong and vigorous, it is well they should understand it is so by a sufficiently brave outward show, which impresses them rather than very quiet working which they easily mistake for timidity."<sup>31</sup>

The Government of India agreed to Nisbet's proposal about the Presidentship of the Council, but they did not wish him to take a direct and open share in the administration. Lansdowne's idea was to maintain a "responsible native government" under the general control and guidance of the Resident, and not to have departmental officers coming to him daily as their official superior. Nisbet was advised accordingly and asked not to get all his officials from the Punjab. Durand, in particular, favoured a 'mixture' of diverse elements, rather than "a Punjabi ring", in the Kashmir administration.<sup>32</sup>

The decision of the Government of India about the administrative change in Kashmir was communicated to the Maharaja in the middle of April. A private Darbar was held for that purpose which was attended by the Resident, the Maharaja, his brothers, Pandits Suraj Kaul and Bhag Ram, Diwan Janki Prashad, an old official of the state, and Sirdar Rup Singh, Governor of Kashmir. The Maharaja received it calmly, and after the conclusion of the meeting told Nisbet that he would "think it over" and soon give an answer. The Resident was thereupon obliged to remind him that what had been communicated was an order of the Government of India and no reply to it was wanted. On 18 April 1889, the first meeting of the Council was held.<sup>33</sup>

Lord Cross, the Secretary of State for India, fully approved of the proceedings of Lansdowne's Government.<sup>34</sup> But the supersession of Pratap Singh gave rise to bitter criticisms in

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> NAI/FDP, Sec. E., May 1889, Cons. 558-59.

<sup>33</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 19 April 1889, encl. in GI to SS, 26 July 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), p. 915.

<sup>34</sup> SS to GI, 24 May 1889, PSDI/15, pp. 87-94.

other quarters. By some of the Anglo-Indian papers it was of course justified by the long course of maladministration in Kashmir and the 'notorious' incapacity of the Maharaja to direct the affairs of the state.<sup>35</sup> But the Indian Press vehemently criticised the action of Lansdowne's Government. The British Resident was abused in unmeasured terms for what was denounced as his treacherous conduct;<sup>36</sup> the Government of India was suspected of annexationist designs.<sup>37</sup> For sometime there was such an upsurge of feelings throughout the country that Lansdowne seemed to be somewhat shaky. He even considered the publication of an official statement to contradict what Ardagh<sup>38</sup> called the 'misrepresentations' of the Indian Press.<sup>39</sup> Although this was not done, official secrets "leaked through the waste paper basket" and found their way to the Indian Press.<sup>40</sup> These papers refused to believe that the Maharaja had voluntarily resigned, and continued to shower abuses upon the Indian Government.<sup>41</sup>

About this time, Sir Lepel Griffin<sup>42</sup> made a suggestion that the Government of India should colonise Kashmir with British settlers.<sup>43</sup> That intensified the criticisms made by the Indian Press, and before long Charles Bradlaugh<sup>44</sup> drew the

<sup>35</sup> *Pioneer*, 29 April 1889, p.1; *Civil and Military Gazette*, 24 April 1889, p. 4 ; 6 June 1889, p.3.

<sup>36</sup> Translation of an article from the *Akbar-i-Am*, 28 May 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., July 1889, Cons. 163.

<sup>37</sup> *Indian Mirror*, May 1, 1889 ; *People's Journal*, 3 Aug. 1889, as published in *The Kashmir Conspiracy or The truth of the Maharaja's Case* pp. 20-22; *Hindoo Patriot*, 26 Aug. 1889, p. 399 ; Lansdowne to Cross, 19 July 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IX(a), pp. 121-25; Lansdowne to Cross, 2 Aug. 1889, *ibid.*, pp. 128-31.

<sup>38</sup> Private Secretary of Lord Lansdowne.

<sup>39</sup> Ardagh to Durand, 26 April 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., May 1889, Cons. 553-67, K.W.2.

<sup>40</sup> For instance, Nisbet's letter to Amar Singh, dated 17 April 1889, reviewing the new arrangement in Kashmir was published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 23 May 1889, p. 5.

<sup>41</sup> *Indian Mirror*, 21 and 23 April 1889; *Hindoo Patriot*, May 6, 1889; *Bengalee*, 15 June 1889; *The Kashmir Conspiracy or The Truth of the Maharaja's Case* ; Articles from *People's Journal*.

<sup>42</sup> Then a Civil Annuitant. The famous Punjab Administrator, reputed for his services in Afghanistan.

<sup>43</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 19 July 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IX(a), pp. 121-25, Cross Papers/27, No. 34 ; *Indian Mirror*, 11 July 1889 ; Bose, J.C., *Cashmere & its Prince*, p. 81.

<sup>44</sup> Freethought advocate and Politician ; M.P. for Northampton.



attention of the House of Commons to that matter. In fact, although an important section of the British Press remained silent over the matter,<sup>45</sup> a demand was made in the Lower House as early as the middle of April for the presentation of official papers to its members.<sup>46</sup> Not long afterwards, this demand was reiterated by Bradlaugh when he drew the attention of the House of Commons to what he considered to be the forced resignation of the Maharaja. He demanded that an enquiry into the matter should be made by a Select Committee of the House, or in some other suitable manner, and that the Maharaja should be given a fair opportunity to defend his case.<sup>47</sup> Even in India some Englishmen protested against the 'hasty' decision of the Government of India to set aside Pratap Singh.<sup>48</sup>

In this sensitive state of feelings the Maharaja submitted his representation to Lord Lansdowne for a reconsideration of the decision of the Government of India. In the month of April, when Roberts was on a visit to Kashmir to inspect the army of that state, the Maharaja had appealed to Sir Frederick to urge the Viceroy to reinstate him.<sup>49</sup> This appeal was renewed in a lengthy letter to Lord Lansdowne, dated May 14, 1889, which was sent through Pandit Gopinath, the editor of the *Akbar-i-Am*. The Maharaja complained that he had been "extremely misrepresented" to the Government of India by his enemies, chiefly his youngest brother, Raja Amar Singh, who had long been intriguing to compass his destruction. Pratap repudiated the seditious letters attributed to him as "most daring forgeries", and accused Colonel Nisbet of obtaining his letter of resignation by "a great and many-sided pressure". He appealed to the Viceroy to give him a "fair trial" with complete independence of action, so that he could prove in three to five years' time that he was capable of reorganising his own state to the benefit of

<sup>45</sup> *The Times* for instance, gave only an obscure corner of its columns on 2 May 1889, p. 5, to the announcement of the new arrangement in Kashmir.

<sup>46</sup> Hansard, Third Series, Vol. 335, 15 April 1889, Col. 485. This was done by W.S. Caine, Member for Barrow-in-Furness.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 337, 20 June 1889, Cols. 299-302.

<sup>48</sup> *Civil and Military Gazette*, 15 June 1889, p. 6.

<sup>49</sup> Roberts to Maharaja, 21 June 1889, Roberts Papers/Box File 100/6.

the paramount power.<sup>50</sup> This letter was sent to the Foreign Department accompanied by another which was addressed by Pratap Singh to Sir Mortimer Durand. In that letter the Maharaja entreated Sir Mortimer to exercise his personal influence upon the Viceroy so that he might be saved from his miserable plight.<sup>51</sup>

While Gopinath was engaged in pleading the Maharaja's case with the Foreign Secretary, a libellous attack was made by the *Akbar-i-Am* on Colonel Nisbet, accusing him of gross treachery against the Maharaja. It was alleged that the Resident came to Kashmir pretending to be a friend of the Maharaja's, but immediately upon his arrival in the state, he began to intrigue with Raja Amar Singh with a view to removing the Maharaja and making himself the *de facto* ruler of the state.<sup>52</sup> An issue of this paper was sent by the Resident to Durand. Earlier, Nisbet had communicated to the Foreign Secretary that he had it from reliable sources that Gopinath had been sent to Simla by the Maharaja with large funds to agitate. He even urged that the Maharaja's representative, if found, should be given "a strong hint" to leave immediately.<sup>53</sup>

This had its desired effect. In framing his reply to the Maharaja, Durand practically anticipated Lord Lansdowne by impressing upon Pratap Singh that he must get rid of all the undesirable men who surrounded him, such as Gopinath, whose sole motive was to further their own interests at the expense of his. He advised the Maharaja to accept the decision of the Government of India in good grace, and not to oppose their "wishes and orders". That was the surest way, he assured Pratap Singh, of regaining his power and position lost through his own mistaken policy.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Maharaja to Lansdowne, 14 May 1889, encl. in GI to SS, 26 July 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), p. 915 ; Gopinath to Ardagh, 7 June 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>51</sup> Maharaja to Durand, 28 May 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., August 1889, Cons. 168.

<sup>52</sup> Article in the issue of 28 May 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., July 1889, Cons. 163.

<sup>53</sup> Resident to India, 24 May 1889, *ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Durand to Maharaja, 11 June 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., August 1889, Cons. 173.

Meanwhile, Pratap Singh had announced his intention to retire to Jammu for some time, ostensibly to perform certain ceremonies connected with his father's death, but really to avoid having anything to do with the new administration. His original plan was to leave for Jammu sometime in the middle of August, but he suddenly changed his mind; and soon after Roberts' visit to Kashmir was over, he announced that he would immediately go to Jammu. As Nisbet put it :

"His object now in doing so is to avoid me, and to sit in a cave of Adullam at Jammu with many ill advised and mischievous persons who do not accept the new arrangements."

The Resident alleged that he was told by some that the Maharaja's intention was to consult and employ lawyers from Lahore or elsewhere to make out a petition of grievances for presentation to the Indian Government or to the Secretary of State for India in London.<sup>55</sup> In the light of after events, Nisbet's information does not seem to have been altogether baseless ; that, at any rate, Pratap Singh intended to avoid the new administration is more than certain. He thought he was considered a cipher at Srinagar and should therefore "set himself apart from" the new state of things.<sup>56</sup>

In Nisbet's opinion, the Maharaja's departure before the date originally fixed by him might result in serious mischief in the absence of any control over him at Jammu. Personally he wanted that the Maharaja's future movements and places of residence should hereafter be subjected to the Resident's approval ; or alternatively, some political agent should be in permanent attendance on him.<sup>57</sup> But Lansdowne was not disposed "to insist authoritatively" upon the Maharaja's remaining at Srinagar, or to send a political officer with him to

<sup>55</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 17 May 1889, *ibid.*, Cons. 162.

<sup>56</sup> Maharaja to Nisbet, 26 May 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E, August 1889, Cons. 167; also *Civil and Military Gazette*, 15 June 1889, p. 6; Bose, J.C. *op. cit.*, p. 42.

<sup>57</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 17 May 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., August 1889, Cons. 162.

Jammu. So Nisbet was asked to exercise his personal influence to prevent the Maharaja from changing his plans, and even to warn him that if he should be found to be working against the orders of the Government of India, it would not do him any good in the future.<sup>58</sup>

To persuade the Maharaja to stay on in Srinagar, the Resident had an interview with him towards the end of May. When Pratap Singh complained that under the new arrangements he had no part to play in state affairs, Nisbet was "obliged to remind him that he had been relieved of the duties of State at his own request". But Pratap pointed out that the terms of his edict of resignation had been altered to his complete exclusion from participation in the affairs of the state, and that therefore it did not matter whether he lived at Srinagar or Jammu. He expressed his firm resolve to leave Srinagar immediately, regardless of the wishes of the Resident or of the Government of India. Meantime, it had become known that Raja Ram Singh would also accompany his elder brother to Jammu. Nisbet also tried to persuade him to stay on to assist the administration. But the Raja excused himself on the plea of illness in his family. On June 1, 1889, Pratap Singh left for Jammu accompanied by his brother.<sup>59</sup>

The sudden departure of the Maharaja and Ram Singh brought about a crisis in the affairs of the state.<sup>60</sup> The Resident was especially annoyed with Ram Singh, as his absence would seriously affect the work of the Council, especially the reorganisation of the Kashmir army. In a lengthy representation to the Government of India he strongly complained against the mischievous conduct of Ram Singh, stressing in particular his incompetence to manage the armed forces of the state. He complained that Ram Singh had been drawing large sums of money, entirely disproportionate to the revenues of the state which he had spent not to train or equip the troops, but mostly

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<sup>58</sup> Durand to Nisbet, 25 May 1889, *ibid.*, Cons. 165.

<sup>59</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 2 June 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., August 1889, Cons. 169-70.

<sup>60</sup> Durand to Ardagh, 19 June 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

on himself and his officers. Their "attachment he had gained by an almost culpable generosity to them while leaving the rank and file ill-fed, ill-dressed and ill-disciplined, and with eighteen months' arrears of pay due to many of them."<sup>61</sup> He emphasised that if the Kashmir State was to be properly administered, the work of the State Council must not be rendered impossible by the caprice of Ram Singh or anybody else, and that the misconduct of that prince must therefore be immediately checked and seriously corrected. As a punishment for his present misbehaviour Nisbet recommended the immediate removal of Ram Singh to his family estate and his absolute exclusion from participation in the management of the state.<sup>62</sup> Shortly afterwards he complained again that the sort of dual government set up by the Maharaja and Ram Singh at Jammu was causing very serious distraction to the people at large. They did not know to whom they should look for guidance, and who had the real countenance of the Government of India.<sup>63</sup>

Ram Singh's obstructionist attitude was very much distasteful to Lord Lansdowne ; he decided that if that prince should fail to mend his ways, he ought to be deprived of his control over the Kashmir army.<sup>64</sup> As regards Pratap Singh, the Viceroy was anxious to leave him under no misapprehension in respect of the intentions of the Government of India. He was even prepared, if necessary, to receive the Maharaja at Simla and "to tell him face to face that he must accept the inevitable".<sup>65</sup> While Lansdowne was anxious to do nothing that could be construed to mean the annexation of the country, he was determined to "keep the Maharaja in leading strings, for some time at all events".<sup>66</sup> All this was reiterated in

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<sup>61</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 2 June 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., August 1889, Cons. 170.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* Nisbet to Roberts, 9 June 1889, Roberts Papers/Box File N<sup>o</sup> 3, No. R.50/4.

<sup>63</sup> Resident to India, 18 June 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., Aug. 1889, Cons. 176 ; Nisbet to Roberts, 20 June 1889, Roberts Papers/Box File N<sup>o</sup> 3, R50/5.

<sup>64</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 21 June 1889, Cross Papers/26, No. 30.

<sup>65</sup> Lansdowne to Nisbet, 24 June 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(a), pp.275-76.

<sup>66</sup> Lansdowne to the Duke of Connaught, 25 June 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(a), p. 279.

Lansdowne's official reply to Pratap Singh on 28 June 1889. After recapitulating the circumstances in which Pratap Singh was given a last trial by Lord Dufferin's Government, and that too under the guidance of a new Resident who was a man of the Maharaja's liking, Lansdowne observed :

"The reports from the new Resident of the manner in which your Highness had administered the State had been not less unfavourable than those submitted, from time to time, by Mr. Plowden. Notwithstanding the ample resources of your State, your treasury was empty ; corruption and disorder prevailed in every department and every office ; your Highness was still surrounded by low and unworthy favourites, and the continued misgovernment of your State was becoming, every day, a more serious source of anxiety."<sup>67</sup>

Besides, the supersession of the Maharaja, Lansdowne continued, was decided upon by the Government of India at the Maharaja's own request—in terms of his own edict of resignation by which he had pledged himself not to interfere in the administration for five years. It was idle to contend that the edict of resignation was written by the Maharaja under pressure from Colonel Nisbet, and that the Resident, Amar Singh and other officials of the state who were all men of Pratap Singh's own choice had turned overnight from friends into foes. However, he assured the Maharaja that the measure taken was a temporary one and if he, by his manners and dignity could justify that he had not altogether lost the qualities of a wise ruler, Pratap could yet hope to regain in the course of time his due share in the control of public affairs of the state. The Viceroy also warned Raja Ram Singh that the Government of India could not look with indifference to his attitude of non-cooperation in respect of the affairs of the Kashmir State. The prince was reminded of his important position in the State Council, and warned in unmistakable terms that if he should fail to return soon to Srinagar and

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<sup>67</sup> Lansdowne to Maharaja, 28 June 1889, encl. in GI to SS, 26 July 1889, PSLEI/57, p. 1021.

resume his duties, it would be "necessary to make some arrangement for the transfer of those duties to other hands".<sup>68</sup>

To this communication Pratap Singh replied on 14 July 1889. He tried again to defend his conduct by attributing all his past failures to the intrigues of Raja Amar Singh—to his misrepresentations both to the Resident and to the Government of India. He repudiated his letter of resignation as a forced document, obtained from him by Colonel Nisbet at Amar Singh's instigation. He denied that his private servants had ever had anything to do with the administration of the state, and expressed a hope that he would soon be restored to power with all his independence of action. As regards Ram Singh he told the Viceroy that his presence at Jammu was really necessitated by illness in the family which he hoped would shortly be cured. Finally, he pointed out that the *Chaubursee* ceremony,<sup>69</sup> for which they had all come to Jammu was near at hand, and that it also demanded the presence of Raja Amar Singh at that place.<sup>70</sup>

Meanwhile Nisbet, on his own authority, had asked Ram Singh to come to Srinagar to participate in the discussions of the State Council, especially in those bearing upon the question of army reorganisation. He asked him to fix a date for resuming his duties, but Ram Singh regretted his inability to do so, excusing himself again on ground of sickness in his family. Nisbet thought that the Raja was adamant ; in consequence he represented to the Foreign Department that they should consider Amar Singh for the permanent Presidentship of the Council. Ram Singh, he argued, had failed by his mischievous conduct to justify his appointment to that office, whereas Amar Singh had rendered every assistance in carrying out the wishes of the Government of India.<sup>71</sup> Lansdowne approved of Nisbet's

<sup>68</sup> Lansdowne to Maharaja, 28 June 1889, encl. in GI to SS, 26 July 1889, *ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> The religious ceremony connected with Ranbir Singh's death, and due to be held at the end of the fourth year and the beginning of the fifth.

<sup>70</sup> Pratap Singh to Lansdowne, 14 July 1889, sub-encl. in encl. 2A in No. 41, Lansdowne to Cross, 5 Sept. 1889, Cross Papers/27 ; PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 843-45.

<sup>71</sup> Nisbet to India, 22 July 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., August 1889, Cons. 193.

proposal, but he was more concerned about Ram Singh's alienation, and was even willing to consider his replacement by Pratap Singh in the command of the Kashmir army.<sup>72</sup> This, however, was not necessary, as Ram Singh soon quarrelled with the Maharaja and parted.<sup>73</sup> He came back to Srinagar, professed regret at his past conduct, and expressed his intention to work in cooperation with the Resident and the Council.<sup>74</sup>

The agitation by the Indian Press against the Government of India had meanwhile continued unceasingly. Lepel Griffin's proposal for the colonisation of Kashmir was commented upon in this connection, and it was predicted that Kashmir would be declared British territory before the expiration of Lansdowne's term of office.<sup>75</sup> It was reported by the Thuggee and Dacoity Department that Pratap Singh's partisans, Pandits Surajbal and Muhanandjee were actively intriguing with Gopinath to get the Maharaja's case forwarded to the Indian Political Agency in London whose mouthpiece was Bradlaugh.<sup>76</sup> Official papers continued to find their way to the Indian Press, and when Lansdowne's despatch to the Home Government, reviewing the circumstances of Pratap Singh's supersession, was published by the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* on 15 August 1889, Ardagh suspected that it had leaked through the machinations of Bradlaugh and Digby.<sup>77</sup>

At the end of July, William Digby of the Indian Political Agency had addressed a letter to the Members of the House of Commons, criticising the action of the Government of India in Kashmir. Digby regarded the appointment of the British Resident as a virtual amendment of the treaty of Amritsar, and tried to prove, with the help of certain papers obtained

<sup>72</sup> India to Resident, 29 July 1889, *ibid.*, Cons. 197; India to Resident, 1 August 1889, *ibid.*, Cons. 1889; also, *ibid.*, Cons. 201.

<sup>73</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 2 August 1889, Cross Papers/27, No. 36.

<sup>74</sup> Resident to India, 13 August 1889, NAI/FDP, Sec. E., August 1889, Cons. 202.

<sup>75</sup> *Hindoo Patriot*, 26 August 1889, p. 399.

<sup>76</sup> Extract from Secret Report of Thuggee and Dacoity Department of 7 Aug. 1889, encl. 2 in Lansdowne to Cross, 16 Aug. 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IX(a), No. 46.

<sup>77</sup> Ardagh to Godley, 21 Aug. 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VIII(a), No. 76, p. 90.



from a private source, that pressure was brought to bear upon the Maharaja to secure his letter of resignation. It was very unfortunate that Pratap Singh, a kind and good ruler who had always been "animated by a staunch loyalty to the British dominance", should have been so unjustly vilified as he had been by the Kashmir Resident and Lord Lansdowne. No misgovernment, Digby complained, had been proved against the Maharaja ; according to his information none did really exist. As a remedy for the unhappy state of affairs in Kashmir, he suggested that the House of Commons should call for the immediate production of all the relevant papers, and if it should be found that the Maharaja's grievances against the Indian Government were well-founded, a Select Committee of the House, or a Royal Commission, ought to be appointed to investigate into the manner in which the Maharaja was set aside.<sup>78</sup>

A Secret Committee Minute on Digby's letter called it an "utterly wrong" statement.<sup>79</sup> The *Evening News* described it as "a mixture of cant, exaggeration, ignorance and partisanship of the most exaggerated character".<sup>80</sup> Even so, trouble in the British Parliament over the Kashmir issue was apprehended both at Simla and in London. Some time earlier *Reuter* had published a telegram suggesting a possible motion by Bradlaugh in the House of Commons.<sup>81</sup> The rumour persisted and Cross had to comfort Lansdowne by assuring his support against

"any outcry that may be raised, or that has been raised, about Kashmir".<sup>82</sup>

Before long, a question was asked in the House of Lords by Herschell if there was any truth in the rumour about the Government of India's intention to annex Kashmir. Cross repudiated the idea of annexation, but gave a hint that when the condition of the state should be improved, the Maharaja would

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<sup>78</sup> The letter is dated 31 July 1889, PSHC/109, p. 1001(a).

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Extract given in *Civil and Military Gazette*, 4 September 1889, p. 6.

<sup>81</sup> Cross to Lansdowne, 19 July 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IX(a), pp. 59-60.

<sup>82</sup> Cross to Lansdowne, 15 Aug. 1889, *ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

be free to resume control over it.<sup>83</sup> Lansdowne was happy at the repudiation of the idea of supposed annexation, but did not appreciate the latter part of the Secretary of State's statement. The Maharaja's resumption of control of the state, he pointed out,

"will depend a good deal upon his own personal conduct, as well as upon the general situation at the moment."<sup>84</sup>

Undaunted by Press criticisms of his letter to Members of the British Parliament, Digby wrote another to the Editor of *The Times*, which was published in the issue of 7 September 1889.<sup>85</sup> In this letter he reiterated his previous views about Pratap Singh as a ruler, and followed this up by a long statement of the reforms which that prince had claimed to have introduced after his accession to the throne. He criticised the Government of India for setting aside the Maharaja on the strength of a letter of resignation which, he maintained, was forcibly obtained from him. Even that letter, he further alleged, had not been strictly adhered to by the Government of India. For instance, the Maharaja agreed to the formation of a new Council only on condition that he himself was to preside over it. The Kashmir case, Digby concluded, was one of the many instances of gross injustice done by the Indian Foreign Office ; and it was time that the Viceroy of India had taken some measure to reinstate the Maharaja to his place of power and dignity.

While the Maharaja's case was being pleaded by the Press and respectable individuals, Lansdowne proceeded to answer Pratap Singh's communication of 14 July 1889. In this letter, dated 3 September 1889,<sup>86</sup> Lansdowne pointed out to the Maharaja that he had failed to afford sufficient reason that would justify a reversal of the decision of the Government of India. The Maharaja's letter contained little beyond a series

<sup>83</sup> Hansard, Third Series, House of Lords, 27 Aug. 1889, Vol.340, Col.573.

<sup>84</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 23 September 1889, No. 43, Cross Papers/27, Lansdowne Papers/LX(a), pp. 159-61.

<sup>85</sup> Entitled *Lord Lansdowne and the Maharaja of Kashmir*. p. 4.

<sup>86</sup> Encl. 2A in No. 41, Lansdowne to Cross, 6 Sept. 1889, Cross Papers/27.

of accusations against his brother, Raja Amar Singh, which were in contradistinction to the confidence that the Maharaja himself had latterly placed in the Raja whom he designated for the high office of Prime Minister of the state. The Viceroy refused to accept the allegation of Pratap Singh that his letter of resignation was obtained from him by undue pressure ; after recapitulating the circumstances in which Pratap Singh made his "voluntary resignation", Lord Lansdowne observed that his interference in the Kashmir State had been prompted "not by a desire to reap any advantage for the British Government, but because he had sufficient evidence to believe that unless a more vigorous attempt than the Maharaja was capable of, was made by the Government of India, there was no hope of resuscitating the Kashmir State". In conclusion, Lansdowne firmly advised the Maharaja to bear with all dignity the loss of power that he had sustained, and above all, to refrain from any useless attempt to oppose the measures that the Government of India had determined to take, and in which he, as Viceroy, intended to persevere.

Lansdowne's Government might have taken a determined stand on the Kashmir issue, but the Indian Press kept up the agitation against it. The *Indian Mirror* published a long list of reform projects undertaken by the Government of India at the expense of the Darbar, and concluded that the Kashmir State had thereby been made completely bankrupt.<sup>87</sup> A Minute on Gilgit defence by Sir Mortimer Durand, dated 6 May 1888, was reproduced in an article in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* ; the writer concluded that "His Highness was deposed not because he resigned or oppressed his people, but because Gilgit was wanted for strategical purposes by the British Government."<sup>88</sup> Earlier the Russian Press had criticised the Government of India for its annexationist designs, contending that the British seizure of Kashmir constituted a serious threat to the Russian interests in Central Asia.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> September 28, 1889.

<sup>88</sup> Issue of 3 October 1889, p. 6.

<sup>89</sup> Russian apprehensions about Kashmir : Translation of an article in the *Novoe Vremya*, vide *Pioneer*; October 2, 1889, p. 6. *Civil and Military Gazette*, 31 Aug. 1889, p.2.

Against these accusations it became difficult for Lansdowne to keep quiet. Durand was asked to consult the Legislative Department to find out whether any penal measure could be taken against the *Indian Mirror*.<sup>90</sup> Ardagh drew the attention of the Foreign Department to Digby's letter in *The Times* of 7 September and asked them to have an answer ready.<sup>91</sup> Lansdowne himself invited Scoble<sup>92</sup> to luncheon to discuss whether anything could be done against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.<sup>93</sup> Although no punitive measures could be immediately taken against that paper, Scoble soon introduced the Official Secrets Bill in the Legislative Council. In the course of his speech on this Bill, Lansdowne gave a public contradiction to the *Patrika's* statements.<sup>94</sup> The Viceroy was further delighted when Dufferin backed up his policy in Kashmir in a speech at a banquet of the London Chamber of Commerce.<sup>95</sup> He congratulated his predecessor for this timely reference to Kashmir and thought that it would adequately strengthen his hands.<sup>96</sup>

Meanwhile, Pratap Singh had again appealed to Lord Lansdowne to reinstate him in his "former position" in view of the impending visit to India of Prince Albert Victor. At least on this ground, if not on any other, he 'begged' to be restored to power, so that he

"may be spared the deep pain and the indelible humiliation of coming under His Royal Highness's notice in my present miserable and unbearable position."<sup>97</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Ardagh to Durand, 5 Oct. 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(b), No. 208.

<sup>91</sup> Ardagh to Barnes, Oct. 7, 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(b), p. 194.

<sup>92</sup> Legal Member of Lansdowne's Council.

<sup>93</sup> Lansdowne to Scoble, 14 Oct. 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VIII(b), No. 109.

<sup>94</sup> Encl. 2 in No. 47, Lansdowne to Cross, 21 Oct. 1889, Cross Papers/27, The speech was delivered on Oct. 17, 1889.

<sup>95</sup> Dufferin to Lansdowne, 6 Nov. 1889, No. 108(a), Lansdowne Papers/VIII(a), p. 127. The banquet was held at Hotel Metropole on 30 Oct. 1889, *Pioneer*, 21 Nov. 1889. For the speech, *ibid*.

<sup>96</sup> Lansdowne to Dufferin, 30 Nov. 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VIII(a), pp. 115-16.

<sup>97</sup> Maharaja to Lansdowne, n.d., Lansdowne Papers/VII(b), p. 309.

This was followed in the month of October by a further representation by the Maharaja which was written in reply to Lansdowne's communication of 3 September. After reviewing the long list of reforms that he claimed to have introduced on his accession to the throne, Pratap Singh tried to meet the charges of the Government of India as detailed in Lansdowne's letter of 28 June 1889. As to the unfavourable reports which were received by Lord Dufferin during the last year of his administration, Pratap regretted that they had been entertained by the Government of India without any reference to him. He emphatically reasserted that the seditious letters attributed to him were all forgeries, and that his letter of resignation, commonly regarded as a voluntary act, was signed by him under severe pressure. He maintained that it would not be true to say that he had had a fair trial when Lord Dufferin accepted his scheme of reorganisation. Under Plowden he was never a free agent, while Nisbet's sudden change of attitude was so perplexing that he himself had never been able to account for it.<sup>98</sup>

Before the time came for Lansdowne to reply to Pratap's communication, an arrangement was made for a meeting between the Viceroy and the Kashmir Council at Lahore in November. Nisbet was particularly anxious that Lansdowne should meet the members of the new Council "and give them a little good advice".<sup>99</sup> Lansdowne also summoned Nisbet to Lahore "to talk over the Kashmir position" and asked him to frame a reply to the recent communication of the Maharaja.<sup>100</sup> To Pratap's appeal for restoration on ground of Prince Albert's visit, Lansdowne had sent his reply by this time : the visit of the Royal Prince would be an informal one, he said, and there would be no opportunity for him to visit Kashmir. Besides, the new arrangement for the administration of the Kashmir State had been in operation for so short a time that any consideration of its re-arrangement was then out of the question.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Maharaja to Lansdowne, 18 Oct. 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>99</sup> Nisbet to Lansdowne, 19 Nov. 1889, *ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 8 Nov. 1889, Cross Papers/27, No. 49.

<sup>101</sup> Lansdowne to Maharaja, 21 October 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(b), p. 224.

Pursuant to the Viceroy's instructions Nisbet wrote a memorandum at Lahore on the Maharaja's October communication to the Viceroy. In the main, it was an answer to Pratap Singh's claim that he had introduced considerable reforms in the state on his accession to power. The other matters referred to by the Maharaja were left out by the Resident because he believed they could be answered without any difficulty. Nisbet pointed out that the credit for these reforms, on which the Maharaja had prided himself, did not solely belong to him. Many of them had been planned, and some introduced, by the late Maharaja—Pratap Singh having only recorded his approval of his father's measures on the occasion of his installation. Even then, the reforms had been introduced without any corresponding measure for replenishing the financial loss incurred upon the removal of various taxes and cesses. Nisbet alleged that this had proved to be a grave financial blunder, with the result that the officials of the state, especially the army, had been perpetually in arrears of pay. He further complained that the disorderly condition of the Kashmir finances had been increased by the Maharaja's extravagances. Shortly after his accession to the throne the Maharaja withdrew a sum of 34 lakhs from the Riasi reserve treasury, of which 8 lakhs were spent on installation ceremonies ; 8 lakhs in part payment for debts incurred by the Maharaja when he was heir apparent ; 4 lakhs on a journey to Calcutta ; 3 lakhs for an intended pilgrimage which was never undertaken ; and the rest in similar ways.<sup>102</sup>

Lansdowne's discussion with Nisbet at Lahore, followed by the Resident's memorandum in answer to Pratap's letter, confirmed the Viceroy in his conviction that there was no point in reconsidering the question of the Maharaja's restoration at that moment. Although he drafted an answer to the October communication of Pratap Singh, on a second thought he decided not to send it.<sup>103</sup> He was satisfied that the intervention of the paramount power in Kashmir was "absolutely necessary".

<sup>102</sup> Nisbet's Memorandum written in answer to Pratap Singh's communication of October 1889, dated Lahore, January 2, 1890. Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>103</sup> Lansdowne to Nisbet, 10 January 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(c), pp.15-16.

Besides, the new administration of the state had been on trial for a very short time, so that there could be no question of immediately reconsidering the decision of the Government of India in regard to it.<sup>104</sup>

However, if Lansdowne closed his official correspondence with the Maharaja, he made a clear statement of his Kashmir policy at Lahore. He apprehended an attack in the British Parliament for his interference in the Kashmir State. Nisbet was therefore asked to prepare a report which could be used by the Home Government in justification of British intervention in that state.<sup>105</sup> To the members of the Kashmir Council he explained that the Government of India had no ulterior designs upon the state, that indeed their intention was to interfere as little as possible in its internal affairs. The temporary resignation of the Maharaja, the Viceroy asserted, was accepted in the belief that it was "absolutely necessary" to take this step in order to "remedy long-standing abuses". He urged the Council to strive very hard to restore the Kashmir finances ; and when they complained of the reckless waste of state resources by the Maharaja and the Military Department, Ram Singh was warned to mend his ways and Nisbet was asked to keep an eye on the Maharaja's extravagance.<sup>106</sup>

Although, as Nisbet claimed, the tone of the Vernacular Press comparatively changed after Lansdowne's meeting with the Kashmir Council at Lahore,<sup>107</sup> a pamphlet entitled *Cashmere and its Prince* was published at this time by one Jogendra Chandra Bose. This gentleman was one of the Bengali officers who were appointed by the Maharaja on the recommendation of Nilambar Mukherjee. He was in the service of the Kashmir

<sup>104</sup> Draft of Lansdowne's reply to Pratap's letter of 18 October 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11 ; also Lansdowne to the Queen, August 16, 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IX(a), pp. 16-17.

<sup>105</sup> Lansdowne to Nisbet, 3 November 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(b), pp. 232-235.

<sup>106</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 29 November 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IX(a), pp. 188-91 ; Lansdowne to Roberts, 30 November 1889, Roberts Papers/Box File LI, R34/58.

<sup>107</sup> Nisbet to Ardagh, 8 Dec. 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(b), pp.405-07.

state for about four months, and his pamphlet, though a partisan document, was written 'temperately'.<sup>108</sup> Bose wrote it in defence of the Maharaja whom he described as a well-meaning, orthodox ruler. He made an attempt to meet the charges of the Government of India against the Kashmir Prince, criticised the high-handed administration of both Plowden and Nisbet, and pleaded for the Maharaja's reinstatement to his former position and power.

To a certain section of the Indian Press the publication of this pamphlet afforded a fresh lever for renewing their agitation.<sup>109</sup> Lansdowne was a little perturbed and drew Nisbet's attention to it, especially to Chapter VII, in which an allegation was made of Nisbet's extravagance as director of the new arrangements in Kashmir. The Resident was asked to be very careful, so that his conduct might not be open to attack on this ground. As Lansdowne remarked,

"our principal object should be to restore equilibrium in the State finances, and we shall be certainly taken to task if it can be shown that the temporary withdrawal of the Maharaja has resulted in large expenditure, particularly if any part of that expenditure has been incurred upon objects the utility of which can be questioned."<sup>110</sup>

As a measure of defence against any possible onslaught, Nisbet was urged to write out his report on Kashmir, of which he had been earlier informed. Lansdowne emphasised that the report should give a sketch of the financial condition of the state, whereas its general object should be

"to bring into strong relief the undoubted difficulties with which the Council has had to contend, owing to chronic maladministration, and the fact that

<sup>108</sup> Cunningham's Review, 21 Dec. 1889, PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 811-51.

<sup>109</sup> *The People's Journal*, 7 Dec. 1889, as quoted in *The Kashmir Conspiracy*, pp. 71-75.

<sup>110</sup> Lansdowne to Nisbet, 31 Dec. 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.



it has, upon the whole, made a very fair beginning, considering the short time during which it has been at work".<sup>111</sup>

By this time, according to the previous instructions of the Viceroy, the Foreign Department had prepared a review of the statements on Kashmir affairs made in Digby's letter in *The Times* of 7 September 1889.<sup>112</sup> Written by an Under-Secretary, W.J. Cunningham, this review, on reliable authority,<sup>113</sup> described Digby as a salaried agent of the Indian National Congress. Cunningham suspected that Digby had "almost certainly derived his information" from Bose's *Cashmere and its Prince*; if he did not, the unanimity of thought and expression on the part of both the authors was 'marvellous'. As for Pratap Singh's character, Cunningham observed that the accounts given by both Digby and Bose were "somewhat rose-coloured". He quoted from various official notes and reports to disprove their characterisation of the Maharaja, and gave in support of his own contention the argument of Ranbir Singh's desire to pass over his eldest son in favour of Amar Singh.<sup>114</sup>

Of Digby's accusations against the Government of India, Cunningham took up each by turn and sought to establish that his letter was a partisan document. He tried to answer the two or three most telling points in Digby's criticisms in which the latter tried to establish that the Maharaja was deposed on the basis of a letter of resignation that was obtained from him by severe pressure and was then altered to suit the needs of the Government of India. With the help of the triangular correspondence between Pratap Singh, Nisbet and the Indian Government, Cunningham argued that it was difficult to believe

<sup>111</sup> Lansdowne to Nisbet, 31 Dec. 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(b), No. 357.

<sup>112</sup> Dated 21 December 1889, PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 811-51.

<sup>113</sup> A.O. Hume's letter in *Pioneer* of 21 December 1889, p. 6.

<sup>114</sup> Cunningham's Review, 21 Dec. 1889, PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 811-51. Among the Maharaja's sympathisers, Roberts, though admitting that Pratap was a weak man, held Ranbir Singh responsible for his shortcomings. He alleged that Ranbir Singh wanted to make his youngest son the heir, neglected Pratap's education, and did not bring him up properly with the result that Pratap fell under the influence of evil companions. Roberts to Duke of Cambridge, 28 April 1889, Roberts Papers/100/2.

that the Maharaja's edict of resignation was obtained from him by undue pressure from the Resident . Besides, there was not a word in that edict which retained for the Maharaja his right to preside over the State Council. As for the Maharaja's stipulation that he was to abstain from interference in the management of the state for five years, Cunningham pointed out that although this was not literally adhered to by the Government of India, its spirit was not altogether absent in their decision about the Maharaja : Pratap Singh had been informed without any ambiguity that his suspension from power was only a temporary measure.<sup>115</sup>

In compliance with the Viceroy's instructions, Nisbet drew up his report on Kashmir toward the end of January 1890.<sup>116</sup> He added an appendix to it which was written in answer to J.C. Bose's charges of extravagance against the Government of India and their Kashmir agent. In Chapter VII of his pamphlet, Bose referred to several items of expenditure which, he alleged, were forced upon the Kashmir Maharaja by the Indian Government. This was responsible for the exhaustion of the Kashmir exchequer, and as such, there was very little substance in Lord Lansdowne's indictment against Pratap Singh that in spite of ample resources of the state, the Maharaja's treasury was empty. Some of Bose's allegations, as Nisbet claimed, were false ; a few others were too insignificant to be seriously considered. Nisbet of course tried to contradict all of them, but it would suffice for us to deal with only the major charges in Bose's pamphlet and the Resident's answer to them.

Bose accused the Government of India of burdening the Kashmir State with a recurring expenditure of six lakhs of rupees a year on the Jhelum valley cart road, and a lump sum of 13 lakhs for the Jammu-Sialkot Railway. To these he added three more lakhs spent for the Jammu water works, and another sum of 25 lakhs of rupees which, he alleged, was taken as a loan by the British Government from the Kashmir State. Besides, a donation of Rs. 50,000 was taken for Lady Dufferin's fund,

<sup>115</sup> Cunningham's Review, 21 Dec. 1889, *ibid*.

<sup>116</sup> Dated 29 January 1890, encl. 4 in GI to SS, 21 January 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 417-78.

and another of Rs. 25,000 for the Aitchison College at Lahore. Added to that was a lakh of rupees spent during Roberts' visit to Kashmir, and a further amount of Rs. 50,000 spent on the Maharaja of Kapurthala on the occasion of his visit to Kashmir.

With regard to the construction of the Jhelum valley cart road and the Jammu-Sialkot Railway, Nisbet argued that both these works were begun and estimated for under the late and the present Maharaja, long before he came to Kashmir, and therefore the duty of carrying on these projects devolved upon him as a matter of course. The estimates in neither case had been exceeded, while both the undertakings were of a most highly beneficial character to the state. Secondly, the Jammu water works, which Bose himself admitted "will be beneficial" to the state, were undertaken only at the earnest request of the Maharaja ; they had cost about half the amount he previously expressed his wish to sanction. Nisbet flatly denied that the Government of India had ever taken a loan of Rs. 25 lakhs, or any other, from the Kashmir Darbar. As for the donations to Lady Dufferin's fund and the Aitchison College, Nisbet asserted that the Maharaja himself made those contributions without any external pressure. Other princes in India, equal to and below the rank of the Kashmir Maharaja, had already made donations to both these objects equally munificent. Naturally, the Maharaja might not have wished to stand aloof or appear less generous than his compeers. Finally, the invitations to the Commander-in-Chief of India and the Raja of Kapurthala were extended by the Maharaja himself, and the expenditure on these personages was undertaken by him voluntarily. It was well known, Nisbet argued, that such hospitality was the genius of the princes of India, and Kashmir had a reputation in such respects which it ought to be well able to afford, and Nisbet hoped, it would never lose. Neither a lakh of rupees, nor anything like that sum, was spent on the Commander-in-Chief's visit. Again, the visit of the Raja of Kapurthala with a large retinue, although extending over three months, did not cost Rs. 50,000. Of course a much larger sum had been estimated for his visit to the state, as the Raja's father had been entertained by the late Maharaja on a few days' visit at a cost of over a lakh of rupees.

Lansdowne was "very glad" that Nisbet had been "able to contradict so unequivocally the misrepresentations" in Bose's pamphlet.<sup>117</sup> Even then, he considered that the Resident's report as a whole was not a "complete and trustworthy" document.<sup>118</sup> As Ardagh remarked, Nisbet's statement that the Government of India had never taken a loan from the Kashmir Darbar was "rather too point blank a denial"; at Plowden's suggestion, a sum of Rs. 25 lakhs had indeed been invested by the Darbar in India Government Paper.<sup>119</sup> Lansdowne believed that the report in any case would not serve as an adequate explanation of the recent transactions in Kashmir. The Maharaja's case would soon come before the House of Commons and the Indian Government would be called upon to defend its action.

In the meantime, agitation against the Government of India had assumed quite a different form. Some of the proprietors and editors of the Indian Press combined in their effort to send the Maharaja's case to the British Parliament.<sup>120</sup> Notable among them were Molilal Ghosh of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta, and Pandit Gopinath and Jogendra Chandra Bose, respectively of the *Akbar-i-Am* and the *Tribune* of Lahore. Pandit Muhanand Jee, a dismissed official of the Kashmir State, acted on behalf of the Maharaja. They took the opportunity of Bradlaugh's visit to India toward the end of 1889 to urge him to take up the Maharaja's case in the House of Commons. In fact it was Motilal who, during the fifth session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay, persuaded Bradlaugh to agree to stand by the Maharaja.<sup>121</sup> Bradlaugh was reported to have made the suggestion that a printed petition on behalf of Pratap Singh should be sent to Digby for circulation among the Members of the House of Commons as well as the principal journals, asking for an enquiry into the Maharaja's case by a Select Committee or any other appropriate body. Between them

<sup>117</sup> Lansdowne to Nisbet, 5 Feb. 1890, encl. in No. 62, Cross Papers/28.

<sup>118</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 4 Feb. 1890, Lansdowne Papers/IX(b), pp. 13-15.

<sup>119</sup> Ardagh to Maitland, 25 Feb. 1890, PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 623-25.

<sup>120</sup> PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 721-807.

<sup>121</sup> Motilal to Gopinath, 7 Jan. 1890, PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 769-771; Dutt, P. *Memoirs of Moti Lal Ghose* (Calcutta 1935), pp. 68-71.

these newspapermen raised some money, which was perhaps augmented by contributions from Pratap Singh and sent to Digby, "so that", as Motilal put it, "his interest in H.H.'s case may not flag".<sup>122</sup>

The activities of these men could not be concealed from the Government of India. Reports about them were sent from time to time by the Foreign Department to the India Office in London till toward the middle of February Gorst became convinced that

"we should prepare ourselves to defend the action of the Government of India in Cashmere, as Bradlaugh is sure to bring the matter forward."<sup>123</sup>

He was right; not long after Bradlaugh actually moved for papers on Kashmir in the House of Commons. Cross agreed to present them and informed Lansdowne.<sup>124</sup> The Viceroy was very much worried at first : the Resident's reports did not present the Maharaja's brothers in a favourable light. He even feared that the publication of all the documents might well "render the restoration of the Maharaja virtually impossible"!<sup>125</sup>

Lansdowne, however, "exercised his mind a good deal over the question" and soon suggested the line of defence the India Office should adopt. First, the misgovernment of the state was a matter of notoriety, to which one Resident after another had called the attention of the Government of India. Secondly, the conduct of the Maharaja had never been satisfactory, and there was a complete consensus of opinion about it. Thirdly, Pratap Singh was allowed to succeed only upon condition that the administration of the state should be substantially improved. No such improvement took place, so that in 1888 Lord Dufferin's Government seriously considered

<sup>122</sup> Motilal to Gopinath, 10 Jan 1890, *ibid.*, p. 773.

<sup>123</sup> Gorst to Cross, 12 Feb. 1890, PSDOC/3, First Series, p. 763.

<sup>124</sup> Cross to Lansdowne, 26 Feb. 1890, No. 47, Cross Papers/36.

<sup>125</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 25 Feb. 1890, Cross Papers/35, No. 46.

the propriety of deposing the Maharaja, but decided to give him a further trial. Fourthly, early in 1889 the Maharaja spontaneously offered to withdraw for a time from active participation in the affairs of the state. The fact that this offer was made by him was not disputed ; it was admitted even by the writer of the pamphlet, *Cashmere and its Prince*. Under these circumstances, the Government of India had to determine whether, considering all the antecedent circumstances, the Maharaja's offer should be accepted or not. It was not their duty to concern themselves with the reasons which prompted the offer. The question which they had to decide was whether they were "justified in letting slip such an opportunity of putting an end to the state of chronic misgovernment".<sup>126</sup>

Even so, Lansdowne still wished that the papers on Kashmir were not presented to Parliament at all. He was probably a little apprehensive of the result of the coming debate there. Adverse criticisms by the Indian Press perhaps added to his apprehension.<sup>127</sup> As a result, the question of the presentation of the Kashmir papers to Parliament became a subject of protracted correspondence between the India Office and the Government of India.<sup>128</sup> Durand, then on leave at home, was of course certain that nothing would come out of this "paid agitation in England".<sup>129</sup> But Lansdowne urged Cross to show the papers privately to Bradlaugh, and explain to him that their presentation would injure his client's cause!<sup>130</sup> Cross indeed showed the papers to Bradlaugh before they were presented to Parliament,<sup>131</sup> but the latter was determined to bring the matter forward unless the Government of India willingly gave the Maharaja an opportunity to defend himself.<sup>132</sup>

On 3 July 1890, Bradlaugh moved the adjournment in the House of Commons on the question of Pratap Singh's supersession. He complained that the Maharaja had been

<sup>126</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 4 March 1890, Cross Papers/28, No. 65.

<sup>127</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 26 May 1890, Cross Papers/28, No. 77.

<sup>128</sup> PSHC/115, pp. 1-18.

<sup>129</sup> Durand to Lansdowne, 14 May 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(b), No. 36.

<sup>130</sup> Viceroy to S.S., 19 June 1890, PSHC/115, p. 761.

<sup>131</sup> SS to Viceroy, 26 June 1890, PSHC/115, p. 757.

<sup>132</sup> From the London Correspondent of *Bengalee* 19 July 1890, p. 343.

condemned unheard in spite of his appeal to the Government of India for a fair trial. That unfortunate prince, he said, had been denied what even the meanest person in England would have been conceded as a matter of course. In fairness, therefore, his case should be investigated by a Select Committee of the House of Commons or a similar body. Bradlaugh presented the Maharaja's case in the same manner as Digby and Bose had done before him. He repudiated the idea of chronic misgovernment in Kashmir, treated the alleged treasonable correspondence of the Maharaja as a mere sham, and condemned the Government of India for the alleged bankruptcy of the state.<sup>133</sup>

In answer to Bradlaugh's criticisms, Sir John Gorst, the Under Secretary of State for India, quoted from the official papers to show that there was chronic misgovernment in what was once the Happy Valley, resulting in acute poverty and the gradual depopulation of the state. He amused the House by taunting Bradlaugh, a Radical, for taking up the cause of an Oriental Prince under whose despotic rule, he alleged, the scourge of forced labour had been imposed upon the people with utmost severity. Gorst announced to the House that Pratap Singh's supersession was decided not exclusively on the basis of grave personal charges against the Maharaja, nor solely upon the continued maladministration in the state. It was based on an aggregate of incidents, one following upon another, culminating in the Maharaja's voluntary resignation of power.<sup>134</sup> Sir Richard Temple made a very interesting point when he dwelt upon "the complete disinterestedness" of the Government of India in the recent transactions in Kashmir ! "All that happens", he said,

"is the transfer of power from one brother to another, while the Government of India remains exactly in the same position as she was before, and is in no wise benefited."<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Hansard, Third Series, Vol. 346, 3 July 1890, Cols. 699-712.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, Cols. 713-22.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, Cols. 726-29; also Temple Papers/N286.

After debate the motion was put to the vote and was defeated by an overwhelming majority.<sup>136</sup> Reaction at Bradlaugh's defeat, both official and non-official, was very clearly pronounced. Cross was glad that he would have to hear no more of the Kashmir case.<sup>137</sup> *The Times* was silent about it,<sup>138</sup> but in certain political circles in London there was a feeling that Bradlaugh was paid for his agitation on behalf of the Maharaja ; he should not have at all brought the matter before the House of Commons.<sup>139</sup> In India, however, the reaction was a mixed one. Lansdowne was certainly very much delighted, for if Bradlaugh had obtained much support in the House, "the effect in this country would have been most mischievous".<sup>140</sup> He was happy that the agitation in favour of the Maharaja would now lose the "little strength it still possessed".<sup>141</sup> A certain section of the Anglo-Indian Press congratulated Gorst for his reply to Bradlaugh : it was considered "good in matter and manner alike".<sup>142</sup> But there were others who were not only dissatisfied with the decision of the House of Commons, but were even disposed to believe that it was not the final verdict of the British nation.<sup>143</sup> Perhaps their source of inspiration was William Digby who made a final, though futile, attempt to secure a re-hearing of the Maharaja's case by addressing a lengthy letter to Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, M.P., in July 1890.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>136</sup> The motion was defeated by 226 votes to 88. Hansard, *ibid.*, Col. 631.

<sup>137</sup> Cross to Lansdowne, 4 July 1890, Lansdowne Papers/IX(b), pp. 56-57.

<sup>138</sup> *The Times* only published extracts from the Kashmir debate in the issue of July 4, 1890, p. 7, but otherwise remained silent.

<sup>139</sup> From the London Correspondent, *Bengalee*, Aug. 16, 1890, p. 391.

<sup>140</sup> Lansdowne to Connemara, 8 July, 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(b), pp. 9-11.

<sup>141</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 7 July 1890, Cross Papers/28, No. 83.

<sup>142</sup> *Pioneer*, July 22, 1890, p.1.

<sup>143</sup> *Friend of India*, 9 Aug. 1890, p.1. *Bengalee*, 2 Aug. 1890, p. 364.

<sup>144</sup> Digby, W., *Condemned Unheard : The Government of India and H.H. the Maharaja of Kashmir*, July 1890, London.



## CHAPTER V

# THE COUNCIL AT WORK AND THE PARTIAL RESTORATION OF PRATAP SINGH 1889-93

When the Government of India took the decision to set aside Pratap Singh and place the affairs of Kashmir in the hands of the State Council under the immediate supervision of the Resident, his attention was particularly directed to the following points : (i) a clear definition of the future position of the Maharaja ; (ii) the constitution and function of the proposed Council ; (iii) the reorganisation of the administrative services ; and (iv) the reform of the state's finances, on which the Resident was asked to submit a report.<sup>1</sup>

With these instructions, Nisbet entered upon his new task, and the State Council held its first meeting on 18 April 1889. From that date, too, the new constitution of the Council came into operation. To start with, four of the Council members were appointed to take charge of the new administration. Raja Amar Singh was given the charge of the foreign department, Ram Singh of the army, Pandit Suraj Kaul of the revenue department, and Pandit Bhag Ram of the judicial. Soon afterwards, a fifth member, Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Khan, was appointed at Nisbet's recommendation, and he was entrusted with the 'general' department.<sup>2</sup> According to the constitution of the Council, the members held independent charge of their respective departments, subject to the general control of the Resident. He was the final referee in all matters ; he could veto any resolution passed by the Council or suspend action thereon pending further explanation. Although Amar Singh, as Prime Minister, was the executive head of the administration, the presidentship of the Council was kept open for some time at Nisbet's suggestion. That, as we have seen, was done to

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<sup>1</sup> India to Resident, 1 April 1889, encl. 14 in GI to SS, 3 April 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), pp. 540-542.

<sup>2</sup> Nisbet to Durand, D/O dated 30 April 1889, NAI/FDP, Secret E, May 1889, Cons. 566.

ensure Ram Singh's attendance of the Council meetings<sup>3</sup> which were normally held once a week. In emergent cases, however, special meetings could be convened by the President of the State Council.<sup>4</sup>

On assuming charge of the administration, the Council had to face considerable difficulties. In spite of his abdication, the Maharaja still continued to be quite a power within the state.<sup>5</sup> He was further strengthened when Ram Singh joined him. From the very inception of the Council Ram Singh set his face against it. He attended only few of its meetings, and though invariably voted to the chair, he scarcely showed any interest in the proceedings of the Council. Matters came to a head when he left for Jammu with the Maharaja.<sup>6</sup> Besides, the new administration had inherited from its predecessor a legacy of heavy arrears due to the troops and the civil and public works departments of the state. The treasury was practically empty, and fears were entertained that it would be impossible to administer the state efficiently without providing adequate funds for the current expenditure.

Nisbet's first instructions were to deal with the Maharaja and keep him within the limits of his altered situation. But in that direction the Resident could not go very far. Pratap Singh was reluctant to submit quietly to the decision of the Government of India, and continued to appeal to Lord Lansdowne for his reinstatement. In the face of the Maharaja's representations Nisbet considered it inexpedient to be too strict with him. He even feared that if the Council should so endeavour, Pratap Singh might leave the country altogether and create a scandal.<sup>7</sup>

If the Council failed to cope with the Maharaja, they achieved some progress in other directions. Nisbet believed that the

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<sup>3</sup> *Supra*, Chapter IV.

<sup>4</sup> Quarterly Report of the Proceedings of the State Council from 18 April to 31 July 1889, PSLEI/59, p. 595.

<sup>5</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 31 October 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IX (c), pp. 128-31.

<sup>6</sup> *Supra*, Chapter IV.

<sup>7</sup> Note of conversation between Nisbet and Lansdowne at Lahore, November 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

military question was all important, the more so because it was linked up with that of organising the Native States armies for imperial defence. Although, as we have seen, Lord Dufferin had been hesitant at first to accept the offers of the Native States,<sup>8</sup> he eventually agreed with his colleagues that some measure to utilise the native forces was necessary. His decision was considerably influenced by the report of Major Melliss, who travelled through many of the Indian states, and suggested a reconstruction of their armies for imperial defence.<sup>9</sup> In November 1888, Dufferin made a public declaration of his policy at Patiala : the money offers of the Native States could not be accepted, but a portion of their armies would be trained and equipped, so that they could be utilised in time of war.<sup>10</sup>

This was reiterated in Dufferin's official despatch to Cross toward the end of November. In carrying out the scheme, the Viceroy decided to adopt the principle that the armies of the Native States should remain entirely in the hands of their chiefs and be composed of people of the state concerned. No contingent officered by Englishmen would be formed ; the British officers who would be lent to the states would merely serve as advisers and inspectors, not as Commandants and Regimental Officers.<sup>11</sup> Roberts was delighted at the Viceroy's decision, and proposed to visit the Kashmir State to inspect its army.<sup>12</sup> Pending Cross's approval, only preliminaries were taken in hand by the Government of India. Melliss was entrusted with the general superintendence of the project, while in Kashmir Nisbet took up, as his first duty, the question of reorganising the state army. The Kashmir troops were indeed in a disorganised state. It was a huge rabble that ate up two-fifths of the state's revenues. In addition to that the Maharaja had undertaken to train and equip a contingent of 2,500 for imperial defence. Evidently, the entire question was very big, and to

<sup>8</sup> *Supra*, Chapter III.

<sup>9</sup> Encls. 1 and 2 in GI to SS, 13 March 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB (i), pp. 347-420.

<sup>10</sup> Dufferin's Patiala speech of 17 Nov. 1888 was published in *Pioneer* on 19 Nov., encl. in No. 119, Cross Papers/25.

<sup>11</sup> GI to SS, 24 November 1888, PSLEI/55, p. 1013.

<sup>12</sup> Roberts to Dufferin, 22 November 1888, Roberts Papers/R98/1, pp. 93-9.

start with, the Maharaja asked for some officers and drill instructors from India to train his troops. Lansdowne sent Major Drummond and Captain Hogge for the supervision respectively of the Maharaja's cavalry and infantry. Finally, in the month of April, came Sir Frederick Roberts; but by then Pratap Singh had been set aside and the Kashmir administration entrusted to the State Council.<sup>13</sup>

When the new administration entered upon its duties the condition of the state troops was nearly as bad as ever. The total number was still maintained at about 22,000; as the expenditure on the army was more than the state could bear, the troops were perpetually in arrears of pay. On that account, the troops were very much discontented and, as Drummond complained,

"it has been impossible to attempt anything more than a slight training".<sup>14</sup>

What was still worse, there was reason to believe that pay was drawn for many troops whose existence was only shown on paper, but who in reality did not exist. Men who had the opportunity of knowing the truth shared the belief that there were not more than ten or twelve thousand men in the ranks.<sup>15</sup>

That such a state of affairs would be shocking to Roberts was only natural. He shuddered at the abnormal number of men and officers in the Kashmir army, and at once disapproved of the high expenditure that the state incurred upon it. He advised that the Council should immediately reduce the number of the troops, arrange to pay up the arrears of pay, disband the disabled with gratuity, increase the salaries of those who would be retained, and, above all, borrow British officers to train the army.<sup>16</sup> Both Lansdowne and Durand concurred in Roberts'

<sup>13</sup> *Supra*, Chapter IV.

<sup>14</sup> Drummond's Report on Kashmir Cavalry, 1 Oct. 1889, Hogge's Report of the progress made by the Kashmir Infantry from Feb. to Sept. 1889, n.d., Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>15</sup> Nisbet's Report on Kashmir, 29 January 1890, encl. 4 in GI to SS, 21.1. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 417-78.

<sup>16</sup> Notes by Roberts on the Kashmir Army, 11 May 1889, and 19 June 1889, Roberts Papers/96/1, pp. 363-67, 395-96.

opinion that every endeavour should be made to pay the arrears due to the Kashmir army and reduce its numbers, so that the state exchequer might be relieved of the burden which had hitherto been imposed upon it.<sup>17</sup>

The Kashmir Council, too, realised the seriousness of army reform, and clearly saw what was immediately necessary. They decided to cut down the expenditure and reduce the number of the troops, without however impairing the strength of the force necessary for the safety of the state and of the Indian Empire.<sup>18</sup> It was however easy to take a decision, but difficult to act upon it. Any reduction in the military expenditure involved a considerable diminution in the strength of the army. This required a careful handling to avoid disaffection which would result from precipitate reductions. Besides, the Council found it useless to frame any budget until the financial administration of the army was placed on a sound footing, and accurate information obtained as to the real strength of the forces. They felt it was impossible to unravel these details without some assistance from the British Government. The suggestion for a British officer to assist the Council in this matter came from Nisbet,<sup>19</sup> and when he and the members of the Council met the Viceroy at Lahore in November 1889, they asked for a field officer to bring the whole army administration into order.<sup>20</sup> Lansdowne asked Roberts to nominate someone for this purpose ;<sup>21</sup> the Commander-in-Chief, at Nisbet's suggestion, recommended Lt. Col. Neville Chamberlain.<sup>22</sup> Nisbet wanted that the military officer should be placed under him, but Lansdowne decided that he must be lent direct to the Darbar as its Military Secretary, and not as Nisbet's subordinate.<sup>23</sup>

The reorganisation of the Kashmir finances was more

<sup>17</sup> Durand's note on C-in-C's proposals, 25 June 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(a), pp. 472-74; Lansdowne's Minute on Kashmir Army, 1 July 1889, Lansdowne Papers/XIII, pp. 61-63.

<sup>18</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1889-90, Chapter III, PSDOC/3, First Series.

<sup>19</sup> Nisbet to Roberts, 16 Nov. 1889, Roberts Papers/Box File N<sup>o</sup> 3, R50/9.

<sup>20</sup> Encl. 1 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/1B(iii), p. 411.

<sup>21</sup> Lansdowne to Roberts, 10 Dec. 1889, Roberts Papers/Box File LI, R34/59.

<sup>22</sup> Roberts to India, 12 Dec. 1889, Roberts Papers/100/6, p. 933. Chamberlain was Roberts' Private Secretary.

<sup>23</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 21 Jan. 1890, Cross Papers/28, No. 59.

difficult than that of its army. When the State Council entered upon their duties in April 1889, they found almost an empty treasury. The cash balance was insufficient to meet the daily expenses, and there was no possibility of defraying the necessary charges unless the exchequer was replenished from some source or other. Hitherto the practice had been to draw from the Riasi Reserve Treasury whenever the expenditure fell heavily upon the state finances.<sup>24</sup> But no one knew the condition of that or any other reserve treasury, as their accounts were kept for the Maharaja's inspection alone.<sup>25</sup> As against this deplorable condition of the state exchequer, the new administration was faced with large outstandings in the shape of heavy arrears due to the civil servants and the troops. There was, besides, the need for a large amount of money to meet the cost of public works already undertaken. To crown all, there was the extravagant civil list of the Maharaja.

In the face of these difficulties, the first task of the Council was to provide for some funds for immediate expenditure. The easiest source to obtain money was the Riasi Reserve Treasury, but the Council was reluctant to draw upon it indefinitely. They therefore decided to take some loan from it to be repaid as soon as the Council should "recover itself from their present embarrassments". Accordingly, in April 1889, a sum of Rs. 1,50,000 was withdrawn from the Riasi Reserve Treasury for current expenditure. At the same time strict orders were issued to the Provincial Governors to provide funds for future requirements by converting the existing stock of grains into cash at prevailing market rates. Again, in order to ensure the speedy conclusion of some of the public works, such as the Murree-Kohala cart road and the Jammu water works, a sum of 4 lakhs was withdrawn from the accumulated reserve investment of 25 lakhs, held in trust by the Agra Bank.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Quarterly Report of the Council, 18 April-31 July 1889, PSLEI/59, p. 595.

<sup>25</sup> Nisbet's Report on Kashmir, 29 Jan. 1890, encl. 4 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 417-78.

<sup>26</sup> Quarterly Report of the Council, 18 April-31 July 1889, PSLEI/59, p. 595. *Supra*, Chapter IV.

More definite steps were soon taken to improve the financial administration of the state. The Finance Member of the Council framed a budget for the ordinary expenditure of 1889-90, based on the current income of the year. Due to lack of adequate information the budget estimates were not altogether faultless. On the whole, however, they were based on more accurate data than could have been hitherto obtained.<sup>27</sup> At Nisbet's advice the Council had temporarily employed a few Accounts Officers from India to check the existing accounts, and they provided the Council with the available data to draw up the estimates.<sup>28</sup> Although Lansdowne was not happy with the financial condition of the state, the actuals for 1889-90 did not materially differ from the estimates. There was of course a deficit of nearly a quarter of a lakh in the actuals of that year ;<sup>29</sup> but that was more apparent than real, inasmuch as credit was not taken for the value of the stock of grain in the state warehouses. There were no doubt one or two points in the accounts which were not altogether clear, but Lansdowne hoped "that as the Council acquire experience, the accounts will be submitted in a more lucid form".<sup>30</sup>

Side by side, the Council also framed the budget for the extraordinary expenditure for 1889-90. As the income of the state was just enough to meet the ordinary expenditure and left no surplus, money had to be provided from the Riasi Reserve Treasury to pay for the huge arrears due to the civil and military servants of the state, as well as to meet the expenses of the public works which were already in hand. Nisbet believed, and so did Lansdowne, that the expenditure on public works, though heavy in proportion to the resources of the state, was expedient :

"Considering the many benefits likely to accrue from them the Council were well advised in pressing on the work as they did."<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Encl. 4 in GI to SS, 21 January 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 417-78.

<sup>28</sup> Nisbet's Report, 29 Jan. 1890, Enc. 14 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 417-78.

<sup>29</sup> Resident to India, 3 June 1890, encl. in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 491-505.

<sup>30</sup> GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, *ibid.*, pp. 393-405.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, and encl. 4 in it.

The one item in the Kashmir accounts to which the Viceroy took serious exception was the Maharaja's extravagance. Although Nisbet often complained of it,<sup>32</sup> neither he, nor the Council, ever took any measure to check it. On the contrary, the Resident had tried to impress upon the Government of India that any attempt to severely deal with the Maharaja's privy purse would produce very adverse effects. But Lansdowne failed to understand why in spite of his deprivation of active powers, the Maharaja should be allowed to spend as much money as he liked.

"To deprive a sovereign of the right of carrying on the government of his own country, and to allow him at the same time uncontrolled powers of spending its revenues"

appeared to him "a grotesque anomaly."<sup>33</sup> To Cross he regretted that the Resident and the Council "did not take the bull by the horns at once in dealing with the Maharaja's extravagances".<sup>34</sup> But he lost no time in asking the Resident to be very firm on this account, and to persuade the Council to adopt two preliminary steps as a *sine qua non* for improving the finances of the state. First, the Council must take into their hands the absolute control of the reserve treasuries which practically were still being administered for the Maharaja by his own men. Secondly, they must deal without delay with the question of fixing a reasonable allowance for the Maharaja.<sup>35</sup> The Government of India believed that if early steps were taken to do these, it would not be difficult to reform the financial administration of a state which had a reserve of seventysix lakhs of rupees and an income capable of meeting the ordinary expenditure.<sup>36</sup>

Though hopeful about the Kashmir finances, Lansdowne

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<sup>32</sup> Nisbet's Report, 29 Jan. 1890, encl. 4 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 417-78.

<sup>33</sup> Lansdowne to Nisbet, 5 Feb. 1890, encl. in No. 62, Cross Papers/28.

<sup>34</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 11 Feb. 1890, Lansdowne Papers/IX(b), pp. 15-17.

<sup>35</sup> India to Resident, 22 Feb. 1890, encl. 6 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 479-84.

<sup>36</sup> GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 393-405.



was aware that the huge expenditure incurred upon the public works was

“a considerable drain upon the State resources and has consequently attracted adverse criticisms.”<sup>37</sup>

He however agreed with Nisbet that a heavy immediate outlay was in the end likely to prove more beneficial to the state than lighter payments accompanied by a slower rate of progress. Taking a long view, and considering the progress that was made during the first year of the new administration, the decision of Nisbet to push on with the public works seems to have been right. Before the Council had taken office, the Jhelum valley road had been opened to traffic for only 35 miles at an expenditure of 18 lakhs of rupees. But until the road was completed to Srinagar, or at least to Baramula, where the boat traffic of the Jhelum river met it, the road could not hope to yield the result that was intended by its projectors. The result was that a huge capital had been practically locked up yielding no interest or benefit to the state. But during the one year of the Council's administration the cart road was nearly completed making it possible for wheeled carriages to pass the entire way from Kohala to Baramula. The road was, indeed, of great importance as it was sure to foster trade between Kashmir and the Punjab and thus help in the development of the state as a whole. What was more, with the introduction of wheeled traffic and the more extended use of baggage animals, considerable relief could be afforded to the people in respect of the system of ‘begar’ or forced labour.<sup>38</sup> Again, during the same period the Jammu-Sialkot railway was completed and the line was opened to traffic. The town of Jammu was provided with a water works, named after Lansdowne,<sup>39</sup> which supplied a population of 30,000 inhabitants with pure, wholesome drinking water. A similar project for Srinagar was also taken in hand, and was

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* For the criticisms, J.C. Bose, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70. *Supra*, Chapter IV.

<sup>38</sup> Nisbet's Report, 29 Jan. 1890, encl. 4 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 417-78.

<sup>39</sup> Report on the Lansdowne Water Works, by J.S. Attfield, 28 Sept. 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

being rapidly pushed on. It was hoped that these measures would stop the decimation of the population of the state which was often visited by cholera and similar epidemics.<sup>40</sup>

Simultaneously, the Council under Nisbet's direction also undertook to construct a good military road between Srinagar and Gilgit. Toward the end of July 1889, the Resident urged the Government of India to forego the loan of 3½ lakhs of rupees due from the Darbar on account of the Jammu-Sialkot railway on condition that the Darbar would spend the money on a military road from Bundipura to Gilgit.<sup>41</sup> Lansdowne's Government readily approved of it, but suggested that the agreement of 1888<sup>42</sup> with the Darbar should be accordingly revised.<sup>43</sup> The Council accepted the suggestion whereupon the earlier agreement was supplemented by a new one,<sup>44</sup> and the stipulated sum was funded by the Darbar in due course.<sup>45</sup> At the same time, the question of constructing a railway to connect the Punjab with Kashmir was considered by both the Council and the Government of India. This project had been under consideration since 1886. Four separate routes<sup>46</sup> had been surveyed since that time, and de Bourbel submitted his 'general report' to the Kashmir Resident in November 1889. Discussions with private entrepreneurs, who were willing to undertake the construction of the railway, proceeded on the basis of de Bourbel's report, but no agreement could be reached as to the route to be adopted or the terms on which the line was to be constructed.

<sup>40</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1889-90, Ch. IX, PSDOC/3, First Series.

<sup>41</sup> Resident to India, 30 July 1889, IFP/3506, Sept. 1889, Cons. 96, p. 157.

<sup>42</sup> *Supra*, Chapter III.

<sup>43</sup> India to Resident, 30 Aug. 1889, IFP/3506, Sept. 1889, Cons. 97, pp. 157-58.

<sup>44</sup> IFP/3965, Feb. 1891, Cons. 22, pp. 24-25.

<sup>45</sup> Resident to India, 21 July 1890, IFP/3743, Sept. 1890, Cons. 26, p. 167.

<sup>46</sup> The four routes were :

- (i) The Banihal route from Jammu to Srinagar by the Chenab Valley, 175 miles.
- (ii) The Punch route from Jhelum to Srinagar, by the Punch Valley, 181 miles.
- (iii) The Panjar route from Rawalpindi to Srinagar by the Jhelum Valley, 210 miles.
- (iv) The Abbotabad route from Kalake Sarai to Srinagar through Hazara and by the Upper Jhelum Valley, 210 miles. de Bourbel's General Report, 16 Nov. 1889, IFP/3738, Feb. 1890, Cons. 307-08, pp. 561-80.

Another survey of the possible lines was then decided upon, and Lansdowne desired that it should be taken up under the direction of the public works department of the Government of India during the winter of 1890-91.<sup>47</sup>

Side by side with the public works, the settlement operations also made considerable progress under the superintendence of Walter Lawrence. When Wingate proceeded to England on furlough in April 1889, Lawrence, then Under-Secretary to the Government of India in the Revenue and Agricultural Department, was appointed as his successor.<sup>48</sup> When he took over, Lawrence was advised by his predecessor to devote himself chiefly to the work of assessment which was the bane of the revenue arrangements in Kashmir.<sup>49</sup> Lawrence did so, and gradually went deeper into the problem of settlement work. With Wingate's report before him, it was not difficult for Lawrence to detect the three most important evils which accounted for the deplorable condition of the cultivating classes in Kashmir. The first was their subjection to the whims of a numerous official class ; the second was the system of 'begar' or forced labour ; and the third, the indefinite character of the obligations imposed upon them. He acknowledged, however, that a reduction of the number of the revenue officials could not but be a slow process, whereas to secure a higher moral standard among them must necessarily be a work of time. As regards the question of forced labour, he observed that in a country like Kashmir the system must be regarded as "a stern necessity"<sup>50</sup> so long as improved communications did not provide for a greater mobility between one place and another. Its sudden abolition at any rate would, as Nisbet put it, cause a great deal of confusion and difficulty both to the Government and the people.<sup>51</sup>

The improvement of the position of the cultivator with regard to his title in, and liability for, his holding stood however

<sup>47</sup> IPWP/3930, April 1891, Nos. 158-68, pp. 1495-99; IPWP/3931, July 1891, Cons. 213-37, pp. 3289-3300.

<sup>48</sup> IFP/3501, April 1889, Cons. 49-70A, pp. 33-43.

<sup>49</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1889-90, Chap. V, PSDOC/3, First Series.

<sup>50</sup> Lawrence to Nisbet, 13 Nov. 1889, appendix to encl. 4 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 433-39.

<sup>51</sup> Nisbet's Report on Kashmir, 29 Jan. 1890, with encls., *ibid*.

upon a different footing altogether. Lawrence achieved creditable progress in this respect ; in two *tahsils*<sup>52</sup> he proposed an assessment for a term of ten years, and when his proposals were submitted for the approval of the State Council they readily accorded it. The efficacy of the measure was at once seen in the result it produced. Its announcement made the people "alive to the reality and importance of Settlement operations"; a considerable number of cultivators who had been compelled in former times to desert their villages returned to their homes. Both Lansdowne and Nisbet looked upon this as one of the most tangible proofs that the settlement was inspiring confidence among the people.<sup>53</sup>

The Council also entrusted to Lawrence considerable powers in regard to revenue jurisdiction, without however giving undue prominence to the matter by any change in his official designation, or by formally investing him with new powers.<sup>54</sup> As Lawrence admitted, they freely gave him "generous assistance" in his efforts to reform the revenue administration. They also gave him the charge of the state vineyards, gardens and orchards ; and Lawrence made some progress in the direction of inducing the villagers to construct and repair irrigation works.<sup>55</sup> Lansdowne was satisfied that, once the Council and the people of Kashmir began to understand that existing arrangements were not likely to be suddenly disturbed, and that the efforts which were being made in favour of the cultivating classes would not be abandoned, the necessary reforms would be effected with more speed and certainty than it had been hitherto possible.<sup>56</sup>

With regard to the reorganisation of the administrative services, to which Nisbet's attention had been particularly drawn in April 1889, the Council faced certain difficulties at the very beginning. The number of officials in the Kashmir State was

<sup>52</sup> Lal and Pak *tahsils*.

<sup>53</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1889-90, Chap. V, PSDOC/3, First Series; Lawrence to Amar Singh, 14 Sept. 1889, with enclosure, Appendix to encl. 4 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii) pp. 445-73.

<sup>54</sup> For instance, Lawrence was given full powers to receive and dispose of all applications for waste lands direct. Quart. Report, 18 April-31 July 1889, PSLEI/59, p. 595.

<sup>55</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1889-90, Chap. V, PSDOC/3, First Series.

<sup>56</sup> GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 393-405.

greatly in excess of the offices in which they could be called upon to do any real work. It had been the custom of the Darbar to subsidise the official aristocracy, formed of the Pandit class, by means of nominating its members to sinecure offices, many of which were remunerative to the incumbents rather by reason of the opportunities they afforded for peculation or extortion than owing to the salary attached to them.<sup>57</sup> At the same time it was clear from Lawrence's observations that the Pandits could be expected to become fairly good public servants, if they were given proper guidance and adequate salaries.<sup>58</sup> In these circumstances the Government of India agreed with the Kashmir Resident that any measure to reduce the official class must be gradual. They however suggested that, as a preliminary measure to working out any general scheme for disposing of sinecure offices, the Council should get the exact data as to their number, and the compensation that would be necessary for reducing it. They hoped that by working cautiously on these lines and carefully weighing the capacity of each office-holder, real or sinecure, the Council would "be able to effect a valuable reform without incurring needless unpopularity."<sup>59</sup>

In the judicial department, too, the progress reported was less than satisfactory, though honest attempts were made to check abuses in the administration of justice. It remained, as usual, a slow process : suits against influential people were kept pending, or even adjourned *sine die*.<sup>60</sup> There was no elaborate civil code ; the only law in force was a simple Code of Civil Procedure. The administration of criminal justice was guided solely by a Penal Code, and was usually rendered impossible by the rapacity of the officers of the department who considered themselves privileged enough to take the law into their own hands.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Encl. 4 with sub-encls. in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 417-78.

<sup>58</sup> Lawrence to Nisbet, 2 December 1889, Appendix to encl. 4 in *ibid.*, pp. 439-45.

<sup>59</sup> India to Resident, 22 Feb. 1890, encl. 6 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 479-84.

<sup>60</sup> Note on the administration of justice by Bhag Ram, 18 Nov. 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>61</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1889-90, Chaps. VI and VII, PSDOC/3, First Series.

To get rid of this anomalous position, circular orders correcting judicial abuses and laying down rules for the future guidance of the department were issued by the Council.<sup>62</sup> They considered it inadvisable to adopt British codes of law, as they felt that both the judges and the people were incapable of grasping any such elaborate system. They preferred to impart the necessary training to the subordinate judges by the formulation of case law. The Judicial Member of the Council adopted the system of writing elaborate decisions in the cases which came before him in appeal or revision, pointing out defects in rudimentary procedure, explaining or propounding the law governing the case, and showing to the subordinate courts the way to deal with analogous cases in future.<sup>63</sup>

Bhag Ram's efforts to improve the administration of Police and Jails did not also meet with much success. And in the field of Education, which fell under his charge, nothing was done beyond opening a few schools at Jammu and Srinagar. Primary education had to be postponed for lack of adequate funds, and except for one primary school at Muzaffarabad in Kashmir which was established "on the pressing application of the people", no step was taken to improve literacy within the state.<sup>64</sup>

Chamberlain's appointment, as we have seen, was made to facilitate the task of reform in the Kashmir army; but regrettably, it raised a few technical questions that accounted for some undesirable loss of time. As already mentioned, Nisbet had asked for Chamberlain and wanted to have him as his military assistant in the Residency. But Lansdowne was determined that Chamberlain should work with the Council direct, and not as an assistant to the Resident. In this decision the Viceroy was considerably influenced by Durand. What actually happened was that since June 1889, Nisbet had been asking for "a couple

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<sup>62</sup> Nisbet's Report, 29 Jan. 1890, encl. 4 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iii), pp. 417-78.

<sup>63</sup> Chap. VI, Kashmir Admn. Report, 1889-90, PSDOC/3, First Series.

<sup>64</sup> Chaps. VIII and IX, *ibid.*

of good Assistants" for the Kashmir Residency—a military officer to assist him in carrying out army reforms, and an Engineer officer in place of de Bourbel to supervise the public works.<sup>65</sup> From the very first, Nisbet had been annoyed with de Bourbel ; he now demanded that that officer should not be re-employed after the expiry of his engagement with the Darbar in January 1890.<sup>66</sup> When told by the Foreign Department that his claims to a military assistant and an Engineer officer were inadmissible, Nisbet asserted that as Resident and Superintendent of the Kashmir State he was perfectly entitled to such assistance.<sup>67</sup> This annoyed Durand. He failed to understand why Nisbet should style himself Superintendent of the Kashmir State, and remarked that his claims were 'preposterous'.<sup>68</sup> In a note written to Lansdowne he emphasised that Nisbet had thoroughly mistaken his position ; that he was not the ruler, not indeed the Superintendent of the state. His only business was to guide the Council in their work, and not certainly to do it for them. As such, Nisbet was entitled only to one Political Assistant in the Residency ; the other officers, if they were at all to be lent to the Council, should be placed directly under them. In fact, Durand had never wanted Nisbet in the Kashmir Residency, nor was he satisfied with his proceedings in that state. The Resident's demands now exasperated him beyond measure. He urged upon the Viceroy's consideration that Nisbet, unless controlled, would be the cause of much trouble to the Government of India. He would merely justify the allegations of the anti-Government party "that our aim is the practical annexation of the State".<sup>69</sup> Lansdowne agreed with his Foreign Secretary and decided to place Chamberlain directly under the Council. He felt that Nisbet was interfering too much in the administration of Kashmir ; he even complained to Roberts about it. Lansdowne was further annoyed when Nisbet demanded the removal of Bhag Ram on the ground that he was becoming all powerful in the Council, and even trying to split it :

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<sup>65</sup> Nisbet to Ardagh, 15 June 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(a), pp. 429-30.

<sup>66</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 3 Oct. 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>67</sup> Nisbet to Durand, 7 Nov. 1889, *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Durand's note on Nisbet's letter of 7 Nov. 1889, *ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Durand to Lansdowne, 17 Nov. 1889, *ibid.*

"Nisbet is, I am afraid, too much inclined to meddle in details, and particularly in personal questions..... Altogether I am afraid that Nisbet is wanting in tact, and I often wish I had a more judicious man in his place."<sup>70</sup>

If Nisbet was "very much put out"<sup>71</sup> by Chamberlain's appointment, Melliss too was a little apprehensive lest this should lead to an encroachment upon his functions. Lansdowne guessed it, and had a memorandum drafted defining Chamberlain's position. He made it clear that the military officer was lent directly to the Council to aid the Commander-in-Chief of the Kashmir army. He was to form no part of the Residency staff, nor was he to act as a subordinate of the Commander-in-Chief. He would be Military Secretary to the Council and adviser to Ram Singh, but would hold no command of the army. Further, Chamberlain's appointment would not alter in any way the duties or responsibilities of those officers who, under the control of Major Melliss as Chief Inspecting Officer, were entrusted with the work of supervising the training and drilling of the troops which had been selected by the state for Imperial Service. Chamberlain's duties were connected with the general military administration, and had no special relation to the troops selected for Imperial Service, except insofar as they formed a part of the Kashmir army. Lansdowne hoped that Chamberlain would heartily cooperate with Melliss and facilitate the execution of his recommendations.<sup>72</sup>

But his hopes were belied : difficulties arose over the question of reorganising the Imperial Service troops. Under the scheme for the resettlement of the Kashmir army as a whole, which was approved by the Council and sanctioned by the Secretary of State for India, the troops of the state were classified into three distinct categories. Pratap Singh had agreed in 1888 to thoroughly train and equip a force of 2,500 for Imperial defence.

<sup>70</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 21 Jan. 1890, Cross Papers/28, No 59,

<sup>71</sup> Chamberlain to Roberts, 5 January 1890, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>72</sup> Memo., 14 Jan. 1890, encl. 3 in GI to SS, 21 Jan. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB (iii), pp. 413-15.



The Council approved of that, and in addition agreed, under the Gilgit arrangement, to station another force of 2,500 on that frontier. A third group consisted of the regular army required for the ordinary duties of the state, including the support of the British officer at Leh. Lansdowne's idea, which however was not sufficiently explained at first, was that the troops for Imperial defence should be organised and trained under the supervision of Melliss and Hogge who were to be directly under the Government of India. The Gilgit force, on the other hand, which was to be relieved every two years, should be controlled by the British Agent so long as it was in Gilgit, while the Council under Chamberlain's guidance would be responsible for the general administration of the entire army, especially the financial aspect of it. It was further provided that the troops for Imperial Service would be stationed at Jammu and supply the necessary relief to the Gilgit force.<sup>73</sup>

Admittedly, the arrangement was complicated and proved to be a severe strain upon the finances of the state.<sup>74</sup> The arrangement for Imperial defence corps required that its equipment and discipline should be such as to bring it up to the standard which was aimed at in the case of all native troops liable in the event of war to be brigaded with British forces. As it was made interchangeable with the Gilgit garrison, it followed *ipso facto* that both these portions of the Kashmir army must be equally trained, paid and equipped. This accounted for a two-fold strain upon the state exchequer and practically doubled the expenditure the Maharaja and the Council had voluntarily undertaken to incur upon the Imperial defence scheme. In actual practice, Chamberlain found it difficult to cope with the demands made by Melliss on account of the Imperial Service troops.<sup>75</sup> He complained to Roberts that things could never go right until some definite orders were issued regarding the relationship that should exist between the

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<sup>73</sup> Lansdowne to Roberts, 14 Jan. 1890, Roberts Papers/Box LI, No. 34/66.

<sup>74</sup> Lansdowne to Roberts, 4 April 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(c), pp. 172-73.

<sup>75</sup> Chamberlain to Lansdowne, 1 July 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(d), pp. 4-8.

Imperial defence troops and the Gilgit force. Personally, he believed that the *raison d'être* of a Kashmir army could only be to guard its own frontiers. That the state was training a force of 2,500 to defend the Gilgit frontier was in itself a satisfactory contribution towards Imperial defence ; the force of the same strength under Melliss' supervision was only an additional burden upon the state.<sup>76</sup> Roberts agreed with Chamberlain and thought it was a case of "too many cooks". He suggested to the Viceroy that the Kashmir army should be for the defence of the state alone, and Melliss' supervision over the state ought to be dispensed with.<sup>77</sup> Lansdowne admitted that the calls upon the Kashmir army were greater than he could reasonably ask it to bear, but he was hesitant to take any step,

"which might suggest the idea that Chamberlain had, within a few months of his arrival, succeeded in ousting Melliss from Kashmir....."<sup>78</sup>

Melliss, however, provided the Viceroy with an argument strong enough to decide him to maintain the *status quo*. He pointed out that Chamberlain's proposal "to have an efficient Kashmir army for Kashmir alone" struck at the fundamental principle on which the whole scheme for utilising the Native States armies was based, and if that state should be conceded such a privilege, the other Native States too would "ask for a like concession".<sup>79</sup> Roberts of course still maintained that the first concern of the Government of India in Kashmir was to provide for the defence of its frontiers, and if the troops of the Kashmir State could be trained for that purpose, the objects of the scheme for Imperial defence would be adequately realised.<sup>80</sup> But Lansdowne looked at it from Melliss' view-point and argued that if any part of the Kashmir army was ever to be utilised for external service the state must have a force avowedly maintained

<sup>76</sup> Chamberlain to Roberts, 21 March 1890, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>77</sup> Roberts to Lansdowne, 29 March 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(c), p. 230.

<sup>78</sup> Lansdowne to Roberts, 4 April 1890, *ibid.*, pp. 172-73.

<sup>79</sup> Melliss' Note on Kashmir Army, 10 April 1890, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>80</sup> Roberts' Note on Melliss' note of April 1890, dated 8 May 1890, Roberts Papers/96/2, pp. 619-20.

for that purpose. From that premise he proceeded to clear up the misunderstandings which had arisen because the principles on which the Kashmir army were to be reorganised "were not explained with sufficient distinctness" to Melliss and Chamberlain. The Imperial Service corps and the Gilgit garrison, he said, were in reality not two distinct forces, but interchangeable parts of one and the same force : the portion liable for Imperial service being that which for the time being happened to be at Jammu. "In the event of war, the force liable for Imperial service at Jammu would be mobilised, its position having been previously assigned to it in our scheme of Imperial Defence...."<sup>81</sup> Lansdowne thought that the main cause of the controversy was a want of elasticity in the application of the system conceived by the Government of India, and if the system was a little complicated, it was nevertheless sound in principle. To relieve the state of unnecessary expenditure in future he thus stated his policy for the guidance of the officers concerned :

"If the demands of the Chief Inspecting Officer appear to be excessive, the fact should be made known to the Resident, who should be in a position of holding the balance, and who could intimate to us, if the matter was an important one, or to the Inspecting Officer-in-Chief in minor cases, that for particular reasons it was not desirable for him to insist too much."<sup>82</sup>

Meanwhile, Pratap Singh had continued to appeal to Roberts for his restoration, and availed himself of every opportunity to exhibit his fidelity to the Queen and her representative in India. Roberts' official position precluded him from discussing the question of the Maharaja's restoration,<sup>83</sup> but what was surprising was that a change soon came over Nisbet's attitude towards Pratap Singh. Scarcely had he come to know of the defeat of Bradlaugh's motion in the House of Commons than the

<sup>81</sup> Lansdowne's Note on Kashmir Army, 7 May 1890, Lansdowne Papers/XIII, pp. 175-77.

<sup>82</sup> Lansdowne to Chamberlain, 14 July 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(d), pp. 24-26.

<sup>83</sup> Roberts to Maharaja, 8 Feb. 1890, Roberts Papers/100/7, p. 103.

Resident proposed to Lord Lansdowne that the Kashmir situation might be reconsidered and the Maharaja appointed as the President of the Council in place of Amar Singh.<sup>84</sup> In fact, Nisbet had already sent Raja Amar Singh to Jammu to induce the Maharaja to come to Srinagar to resume his position as President of the Council.<sup>85</sup>

This naturally exasperated the Viceroy, the more so because the Resident had acted without consulting the Foreign Department. Lansdowne asked Nisbet not to move further in the matter without instructions, and declared that no departure from the policy deliberately adopted in regard to the Maharaja could be allowed without greater deliberation. The Resident was told that the time was not opportune for a change of policy, that if it should be made at all, it ought not to follow immediately upon a discussion in the British Parliament.<sup>86</sup> Ardagh had to remind Nisbet that the Maharaja's appeal to the House of Commons was in itself a very severe censure upon his own conduct, and therefore the Resident must not hold out any expectation to that deposed prince which might embarrass the Government of India.<sup>87</sup>

To Lord Cross Lansdowne expressed his feelings more pointedly. He was extremely annoyed with Nisbet and had no desire to restore the Maharaja until he showed "some signs of being in earnest".<sup>88</sup> About this time, Nisbet had an interview with Pratap Singh, and in the course of his conversation with him he made certain suggestions which could easily be construed as an assurance that the Maharaja would be restored to power if he should undertake to follow the advice of the British Resident in all matters. Lansdowne was thoroughly disgusted at this. He was "much averse to anything like a transaction with the Maharaja" at that moment, and was happy that Nisbet, who had meanwhile applied for leave, would shortly go on furlough. To Cross he complained that

<sup>84</sup> Resident to Viceroy, 5 July 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(d), p. 18.

<sup>85</sup> Cunningham to Ardagh, 7 July 1890, *ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>86</sup> Lansdowne to Nisbet, 8 July 1890, *ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>87</sup> Ardagh to Nisbet, 31 July 1890, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>88</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 14 July 1890 and 8 Aug. 1890, Lansdowne Papers/IX(b), pp. 78-80 and 88-91.

"Nisbet has done a number of foolish things, and has quarrelled with half the people, with whom he has been concerned. Altogether he is a gentleman who rather keeps me on the tender-hooks."

Actually, Lansdowne could not "make out" why Nisbet was sent to Kashmir at all.<sup>89</sup>

What accounted for the sudden change of Nisbet's attitude towards Pratap Singh is not on record. Perhaps at that time he was contemplating furlough, and wanted to do the Maharaja a good turn before he left. Nisbet had made himself quite unpopular in Kashmir ; indeed he had alienated, as Lansdowne remarked, "half the people" with whom he came in contact. There was talk of his dictatorial attitude in the management of Kashmir affairs. Even men like Chamberlain, Lawrence, de Bourbel and Algernon Durand talked of him in the same vein.<sup>90</sup> Their views were fully shared by the Viceroy and his Foreign Department, and perhaps Nisbet was not unaware of that. At any rate, he was no longer confident about his own position, and might even have felt that he would never come back to Kashmir. Chamberlain's appointment under the Kashmir Council had considerably unnerved him ; he had even apprehended that it was going to be the prelude to his removal from Kashmir.<sup>91</sup> Chamberlain of course never went out of his way to injure the Resident, but Nisbet's own official subordinate, Captain H.L. Ramsay, the British Joint Commissioner at Ladakh, brought a series of charges against him. They would have certainly led to his removal from Kashmir if Nisbet himself had not taken leave and retired from the scene. As a matter of fact, Lansdowne "was anxious to replace him by a better man"; and just when he "was endeavouring to do this quietly", Ramsay fell foul of Nisbet and created a rather awkward situation for the Viceroy.

<sup>89</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 1 Sept. 1890, Cross Papers/29, No. 90.

<sup>90</sup> Chamberlain to Roberts, 5 Jan. 1890, Ardagh Papers/Box 10 ; Lawrence to Ardagh 11 July 1890, *ibid.*, Box 11 ; de Bourbel to Ardagh, 18 May 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(c), pp. 340-42 ; Cunningham to Ardagh, 7 July 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(d), p. 23.

<sup>91</sup> Chamberlain to Roberts, 5 Jan. 1890, Ardagh Papers/Box 10.

As the British Joint Commissioner of Ladakh, Captain Ramsay was required to forward from time to time, through the Resident of Kashmir, his diaries containing information in respect to the affairs of his charge. In July 1890 Ramsay sent to the Government of India his diary for the period from 21 to 30 June, which was accompanied by a memorandum containing a series of attacks upon Colonel Nisbet.<sup>92</sup> Both the diary and memorandum were written in an utterly insubordinate tone, the allegations being made with evident prejudice against Nisbet. Some of these were trivial in character; others either exaggerated or conjectural. Lansdowne was therefore obliged to support Nisbet, although he could not conceal from himself "that in some respects, the unfavourable opinion which Ramsay had formed of his own chief was one" which he himself shared. This created a difficult situation, but Lansdowne decided to get out of it by removing both Nisbet and Ramsay.<sup>93</sup> However, he was spared the embarrassment of this unpleasant task by Nisbet's application for leave to go on furlough, while Ramsay agreed to retrace his steps and withdraw the charges. Colonel W.F. Prideaux, Resident at Jaipur, was appointed to officiate during Nisbet's absence.<sup>94</sup> Lansdowne considered him to be a man of "tact and a conciliatory manner" who could be "trusted to keep out of scrapes and to obey orders."<sup>95</sup> The new Resident took up his duties in December 1890.

For the Council, the new financial year that began from April 1890 did not evidently augur very well. The Melliss-Chamberlain controversy was raging in full swing, and until the Viceroy gave his final decision upon the matter, the future of the Kashmir army was uncertain. Nisbet was in troubles over Ramsay's allegations, and the possibility of a change in the Kashmir Residency was soon added to a rumour about the Maharaja's return to power. That unsettled men's minds and raised new hopes in many hearts. This, coupled with some irregularity

<sup>92</sup> Encls. in GI to SS, 2 Dec. 1891, PSLEI/64, pp. 1209-21.

<sup>93</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 11 May 1892, Cross Papers/32, No. 179A.

<sup>94</sup> IFP/3969, Jan. 1891, Cons. 4, p. 3.

<sup>95</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 18 Oct. 1890, Lansdowne Papers/IX(b), pp. 112-15.

in the collection of revenues,<sup>96</sup> hampered the progress of reforms. Lawrence felt some difficulty in continuing the settlement operations.<sup>97</sup> Public works, however, were pushed on as usual, and that elicited from Lawrence a rather caustic, though exaggerated, remark. The administration, he said, had been too ambitious, and necessary measures of reform had been sacrificed to high-sounding schemes of public works. In his opinion, it was "a case of lace ruffles without a shirt."<sup>98</sup>

Not that reform measures came altogether to a stand-still. The initial difficulties were gradually got over ; with the lapse of time the state of uncertainty passed away. Nisbet was aware that change of residents had hitherto created much confusion in the state. He was therefore particularly anxious that there should be "no interruption in the progress of good work in Kashmir", and assured the Viceroy that his successor would be confronted with "no arrears".<sup>99</sup> With Prideaux's arrival things began to assume their normal form ; before the official year was out progress was recorded in some of the departments, though not all.

With Lansdowne's definition of the policy of the Government of India in regard to the Kashmir army the controversy between Melliss and Chamberlain was over. Thereafter these officers quietly carried out their respective functions, and some progress was made in 1890-91. Two infantry regiments were transferred in the course of the year to the Imperial Service corps ; necessary reductions were made in the regular forces of the Darbar without arousing any discontent among the discharged officers and men.<sup>100</sup> This resulted in a considerable saving to the state, but even then, the financial capacity of the state was at such a low ebb that progress in training and equipping the corps was necessarily slow. As Melliss reported, Kashmir troops in both these respects were still far behind the other Imperial Service regiments in India.

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<sup>96</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1890-91, Ch. III, PSLEI/66, p. 767.

<sup>97</sup> Lawrence to Ardagh, 15 July 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(d), pp. 44-47.

<sup>98</sup> Lawrence to Ardagh, 11 July 1890, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.

<sup>99</sup> Nisbet to Lansdowne, 13 Oct. 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(d), p. 252 (c).

<sup>100</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1890-91, Chap. I., PSLEI/66, p. 767.

In spite of Lawrence's complaint against the Council, they afforded all possible help to his department. By the end of the year the settlement operations, as Lawrence wrote, had made satisfactory progress. Nine *tahsils*, including 1,386 villages, were practically surveyed, leaving only six *tahsils* in the Kashmir province for future measurement. Lawrence established three *patwari*<sup>101</sup> schools, a measure which, Prideaux hoped, would yield excellent results. The reparation of old irrigation channels was undertaken to step up food production in the future ; this was unquestionably a step in the right direction.<sup>102</sup>

One drawback in the system of administration by the Council had been their reliance upon the efficacy of circulars and orders rather than upon an accurate conception of the work to be done, based upon a first-hand knowledge of the conditions of the country and the people to which their circulars and orders were to apply. The departments under the charge of the Judicial Member exhibited this tendency in a great measure without due appreciation of the fact that the circulars were hardly intelligible to the state officials of the older school. Bhag Ram complained of the illiteracy and unfitness of the subordinate members of the Judicial staff, but did not indicate if any serious attempt had been made by the Council to grapple with the abuses. Besides, unreasonable delay in the disposal of important cases occurred, and even political considerations were sometimes permitted to interfere with the due discharge of the functions of the judges.<sup>103</sup>

A piece of good work, however, which was done under the superintendence of the Judicial Member of the Council was the census of Kashmir and Jammu, undertaken for the first time in connection with the general census of the Indian Empire. In this work Bhag Ram was very ably assisted by provincial superintendents, Rishibar Mukherjee and Jya Lal, the Chief Judges of Srinagar and Jammu respectively. Great credit was due to these officers for the excellent manner in which they performed their duties. Baines, the Census Commissioner,

<sup>101</sup> A *patwari* was a native assistant in the Settlement department whose duty was to help in the work of survey.

<sup>102</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1890-91, Chapter III, PSLEI/66, p. 767.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*



expressed his satisfaction at the quality of the work done by them, when he paid a visit to Jammu at the beginning of 1891. The total population of the state was found to be 2,527,710, of which 1,560,915 belonged to the province of Jammu, and 9,66,795 to that of Kashmir.<sup>104</sup>

In the department of public works, the Jammu-Sialkot railway which had been opened for traffic just before the close of the previous official year proved to be a source of great convenience to the people of Jammu. It brought in a revenue slightly exceeding one per cent to the account of the 'Dharmarth' or State Charitable Fund, from which the money for its construction was provided. The building of the Tawi Bridge made good progress, but owing to want of funds it was decided to erect a wire-rope bridge for foot and carriage-traffic, instead of the railway bridge which was originally contemplated. The abutments and piers were practically finished by the end of the year, with the exception of two wells in the pier nearest to the Jammu side of the river. The Jhelum Valley cart road was also opened for tonga traffic in the course of the year, and creditable progress was made in the construction of the Gilgit road. Before the end of 1890 about 40 miles of the road were very near completion. W. H. Johnson, the Executive Engineer for the road, made great exertions in surveying the whole distance to Gilgit. He submitted his proposals about the road and a bridge over the Indus at Bunji for consideration of the Council. It was a comprehensive scheme, and after its adoption the completion of the road became a mere question of time.<sup>105</sup>

Meantime, Pratap Singh had continued to appeal to the Viceroy for his restoration to power. He even approached Ardagh, Lansdowne's Private Secretary, to help him in his efforts.<sup>106</sup> In April 1891, he expressed a wish to Prideaux for an interview with the Viceroy at Simla or any other convenient place. The Resident saw no "obstacles of a political nature to the proposed interview" ; he rather thought that "a few words

<sup>104</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1890-91, Chapter X, PSLEI/66.

<sup>105</sup> IFP/3962, April 1891, Cons. 1-10, pp. 1-13; IFP/4182, Feb. 1892, Cons. 33, pp. 16-18.

<sup>106</sup> Pratap Singh to Ardagh, 2 Feb. 1891, Ardagh Papers/Box 2.

of friendly advice from His Excellency's lips would have a very beneficial effect" upon the Maharaja.<sup>107</sup> Lansdowne was not disinclined to accede to Pratap's request, but he was doubtful as to the time "which would be most proper" for such a meeting. For certain reasons he was disposed to believe that it would be desirable to postpone the meeting till the next autumn. First, he thought that one of the Maharaja's objects would be to persuade him that the time had come when he might be restored wholly, or in part, to the powers of which he had been deprived two years ago. But in Lansdowne's opinion any consideration of the Maharaja's reinstatement ought to be preceded by a proper appraisal of the progress of reforms, because the object of the Government of India in "accepting Pratap's abdication" and placing the affairs of the state in the hands of a Council was to afford an opportunity for removing the abuses with which the Maharaja was not strong enough to deal. Prideaux was therefore asked to state his views in regard to the position of the reform measures with which the Council was then dealing, especially the financial condition of the state.<sup>108</sup>

Apart from that there were two other matters which concerned the Maharaja more directly. One was the 'mischievous' influence of the Maharaja's private servants on him, the other his personal expenditure which was out of all proportion to the income of the state. Lansdowne authorised Prideaux to mention these points to the Maharaja and impress upon him the necessity of abiding by the Viceroy's wishes, not only by mere promises or assurances, but by some measure of accomplishment. Lansdowne expressed his willingness to meet the Maharaja during his autumnal tour, provided in the meantime Pratap should address himself seriously to carrying out his instructions.<sup>109</sup>

Before the date for Lansdowne's visit to Kashmir was fixed, an important measure was taken to improve the financial

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<sup>107</sup> Prideaux to Ardagh, 27 April 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VII(e), pp. 381-82.

<sup>108</sup> Lansdowne to Prideaux, 12 May 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VII (e), pp. 230-32.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

administration of the state. As the Viceroy had apprehended, the Kashmir finances were not in proper condition, and that necessitated the deputation of an experienced English officer to enquire into the defects of the administration and suggest remedial measures. The officer chosen was R. Logan, the Accountant General of Bombay, who arrived at Srinagar on 24 August 1891. He made a careful investigation into the general condition of the state so far as it was affected by financial and revenue considerations, and formulated a series of proposals for adoption by the Council.<sup>110</sup> Pratap Singh had meanwhile become rather impatient to meet the Viceroy and extended him frequent invitations to come to Kashmir.<sup>111</sup> He felt assured when he learnt from the *Pioneer* that the programme of the Viceroy's autumnal tour included Kashmir,<sup>112</sup> and hoped that the Viceroy's visit would "bring redress to (his) wrongs".<sup>113</sup> Lansdowne decided to visit Kashmir in October, but he was unwilling to commit himself to the Maharaja's restoration before he should have the opportunity to study the situation on the spot. Prideaux was accordingly advised to tell Pratap Singh that the Viceroy's impending visit did in no way bind the Indian Government to his restoration which would exclusively depend upon his capacity to assure the continued good government of the state.<sup>114</sup> Personally, however, the Viceroy had made up his mind : even if the Maharaja were to be reinstated, he could never be given "a free hand" because

"he might use it in order to undo all that has been achieved up to the present time".<sup>115</sup>

Upon his arrival in Kashmir on 23 October Lansdowne found "everything in order."<sup>116</sup> To acquaint himself with

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<sup>110</sup> Logan's Report on Kashmir, 25 November 1891, encl. 6 in GI to SS, 9 December 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iv), pp. 1049-1132.

<sup>111</sup> Maharaja to Lansdowne, 2 August 1891, and 15 August 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VIII(f), p. 57 and p. 86.

<sup>112</sup> *Pioneer*, 5 September 1891, p. 1.

<sup>113</sup> Maharaja to Prideaux, 13 Sept. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VIII(f), p. 161.

<sup>114</sup> Lansdowne to Prideaux, 2 Sept. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VII(f), pp. 74-75.

<sup>115</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 30 Sept. 1891, Cross Papers/31, No. 147A.

<sup>116</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 25 Oct. 1891, *ibid.*, No. 151.

the situation in the state, he had several interviews with Prideaux, Chamberlain, Logan, and Pratap Singh and his brothers. At the state banquet given in his honour the Viceroy avoided committing himself prematurely with regard to the future government of the state.<sup>117</sup> But Prideaux suggested that the Maharaja could safely be restored to some portion of his former powers provided he unreservedly assented to the financial proposals of Logan and promised to be guided by the Resident in all important matters. For Amar Singh's services during the interim period, the Resident advised that some recognition might be bestowed upon him in lieu of the loss of power he would sustain in case of a change in the Kashmir administration.<sup>118</sup>

Lansdowne's enquiries left him in no doubt that he ought to restore to the Maharaja "the greater part of his lost dignity without seriously imperilling the work of the Council." He felt that

"whether the Maharaja ever meant to abdicate or not, we certainly 'jumped down his throat' very sharply, and the opportunity of setting the affairs of the State to rights was no doubt too good a one to be lost."<sup>119</sup>

Surprisingly, he was now more "favourably impressed" by the Maharaja than he had expected ; he had no doubt that Pratap, in spite of his weakness and extravagance, was "perfectly loyal" to the British Government. To Cross he wrote :

"I doubted at the time whether the letters which were attributed to him in 1889 were genuine, and what I have since heard strengthens my impression that they were either signed by him in ignorance of their contents, or were deliberate forgeries."

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<sup>117</sup> Encl. in Lansdowne to Cross, 3 Oct. 1891, Cross Papers/31, No. 152.

<sup>118</sup> Prideaux to Lansdowne, 26 Oct. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VII(f), pp. 248-53.

<sup>119</sup> Lansdowne to Hutchins (Sir P., Member, Viceroy's Council), 9 Nov. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VII(f), pp. 176-77.

Moreover, Lansdowne<sup>120</sup> was struck by the fact that in spite of his abdication the Maharaja was "still a power in the State, and able, to some extent, to thwart the action of the Council". On the whole, he came to the conclusion that the time had come when a change should be made in the Kashmir administration. He was glad to find that Prideaux was of the same opinion.<sup>120</sup>

The Viceroy, however, had already made up his mind that Pratap Singh must not be reinstated with full powers. He must agree to a reduction of his civil list, and undertake not to disturb the reform measures already adopted by the Council. With these intentions he invited Pratap Singh to an interview, and after discussion laid down the conditions of his reinstatement in the following manner :

that Pratap Singh<sup>121</sup> would become the President of the State Council, with Amar Singh as Vice-President ;

that the constitution of the Council would otherwise remain unchanged ;

that all measures of reform approved by the Council would be accepted by the Maharaja, and the latter would make no effort to change them without the consent of the Government of India ;

that all future differences of opinion between the Maharaja and the Council should be referred to the British Resident ;

that the administration would be guided in all matters by the British Resident ; and

that the Maharaja's personal expenditure should be reduced to six lakhs of rupees a year.<sup>121</sup>

Pratap Singh accepted all other conditions without reserve, but appealed to the Viceroy to raise his civil list by another 50,000

<sup>120</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 31 Oct. 1891, Cross Papers/31, No. 152.

<sup>121</sup> Lansdowne to Pratap Singh, 6 Nov. 1891, encl. 2 in GI to SS, 9 Dec. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iv), pp. 1045-47.

rupees a year. This request was acceded to, and Pratap Singh was formally restored to his lost dignity.<sup>122</sup>

The Kashmir Council accepted the new arrangement, and agreed to carry out all the recommendations of Logan for the improvement of the financial administration of the state which, *inter alia*, were :

the introduction of a proper system of audit and control, at first to be managed by a European officer lent to the state ;

the substitution of the payment of revenue in cash for payment in kind ; and

the abolition of the worst abuses connected with the forced labour or 'begar' system.<sup>123</sup>

Lansdowne warned the Council against the encouragement of intrigues in the future, and promised them all help in implementing the projected reforms. Amar Singh's loss of power, as Prideaux had suggested, was amply compensated by the conferment of a Knighthood ; shortly afterwards, the Maharaja was made a G. C. S. I.<sup>124</sup>

The resettlement of the Kashmir affairs afforded "the greatest satisfaction to all concerned and the people generally".<sup>125</sup> Lansdowne was glad that he had been able to set things right in Kashmir.<sup>126</sup> Roberts, as Pratap's sympathiser, was highly pleased at his restoration ; he felt that the Maharaja's defects were due to his father's negligence.<sup>127</sup> Cross rightly hoped that Lansdowne's arrangement would work well,<sup>128</sup> while Prideaux reported that everybody in the state was happy. Matters

<sup>122</sup> Viceroy to SS, 7 Nov. 1891, PSHC/126, p. 495; Sykes, P., *Sir Mortimer Durand*, p. 187.

<sup>123</sup> Logan's Report, 25 Nov. 1891, encl. 6 in GI to SS, 9 Dec. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iv), pp. 1049-1132.

<sup>124</sup> Encl. in Lansdowne to Cross, 20 April 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IX(d), pp. 43-48, *Pioneer*, 10 Nov. 1891, p. 1.

<sup>125</sup> *Statesman and Friend of India*, 14 Nov. 1891, p. 4.

<sup>126</sup> Viceroy to SS, 7 Nov. 1891, PSHC/126, p. 495.

<sup>127</sup> Roberts to Lansdowne, 15 Nov. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VII(f), p. 294.

<sup>128</sup> SS to GI, 8 Jan. 1892, PSDI/18, pp. 3-6.

were progressing much more harmoniously than Prideaux had ventured to anticipate. The members of the Council were working together cordially, and there was "not the slightest friction between them and the Maharaja". Prideaux believed that the Maharaja's Presidency of the Council suited "their ideas of the fitness of things better than that of Raja Amar Singh."<sup>129</sup>

The result was seen in what Prideaux called a "marked improvement" in the internal administration of the state.<sup>130</sup> Under Chamberlain's guidance the training of the Kashmir army continued satisfactorily; the result was shown in the Hunza-Nagar campaign<sup>131</sup> in which the Kashmir troops showed themselves not unworthy to fight shoulder to shoulder with their comrades in the British service. In January 1892, the Kashmir Imperial Service troops were brought up to their full strength by the incorporation of a sixth regiment of infantry.<sup>132</sup> According to Logan's recommendation, the forest department was reorganised under the supervision of J. C. McDonnell, Deputy Conservator of the Forests in the Punjab, whose services were lent to the Council.<sup>133</sup> In the revenue department a commencement was made towards effecting the reforms, recommended by Logan, by the appointment of a European Auditor-General, while the settlement operations, under Lawrence's supervision, made considerable progress. Four more *tahsils* were surveyed; assessments were announced and distributed in three.<sup>134</sup> The result, as Prideaux observed, was that the peasantry were fast becoming "a prosperous and contented community."<sup>135</sup>

The judicial department, too, worked with ability. Prideaux was particularly satisfied with the working of the Chief Court of Srinagar which was presided over by Nilambar's brother, Rishibar Mookherjee.<sup>136</sup> The administration of the police was more

<sup>129</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 9 March 1892, Cross Papers/32, No. 170A.

<sup>130</sup> Resident to India, 16 Oct. 1892, PSLEI/68, p. 7.

<sup>131</sup> *Infra*, Chap. VII.

<sup>132</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1891-92, Chap. 1, PSLEI/68, p. 11.

<sup>133</sup> India to Resident, 11 Aug. 1891, IFP/3964, August 1891, Cons. 100, p. 82.

<sup>134</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1891-92, Chap. IV, PSLEI/68, p. 11.

<sup>135</sup> Resident to India, 16 Oct. 1892, PSLEI/68, p. 7.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

satisfactory than in the preceding year, while the jails were administered with credit by Doctors A. Mitra and Jagan Nath, the officers respectively in charge of the Srinagar and Jammu Jails.<sup>137</sup> No original works of importance were carried out by the public works department during 1891-92, but imperial considerations necessitated attention being paid to the Gilgit road. With a view to the more speedy completion of that work, a contract for its execution within two years was entered into with Messrs. Spedding & Co., and considerable progress was recorded by the end of 1891. The bridge of the river Tawi was completed as a suspension bridge early in 1892, but the Indus bridge at Bunji could not be completed owing mainly to the delay in the receipt of the material from England.<sup>138</sup> On the whole, the work done by the Maharaja and the Council, though slow, was satisfactory. With an apathetic and indifferent people their task was a difficult one, and it was to their credit, as Prideaux observed, that they were able to advance in the path of reform.<sup>139</sup>

Side by side, the Council also took an interest in the mountain railway to Kashmir which, as already mentioned, had long been under consideration of the Indian Government. At their initiative surveys for the railway were made throughout 1891, but no decision could be reached as to the route to be adopted. Private entrepreneurs of course still continued to show their interest in the project,<sup>140</sup> and strategists like Roberts considered it "very necessary" on military grounds.<sup>141</sup> But to Lansdowne the prospects did not appear to be very hopeful.<sup>142</sup> One of the capitalist groups demanded a guaranteed interest of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  or 4 per cent over the invested capital, and that too in sterling ; but Lansdowne was prepared only to guarantee 2% in silver.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>137</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1891-92, Chaps, V, VI, VII & XI, PSLEI/68, p. 11.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, Chap. X.

<sup>139</sup> Resident to India, 16 Oct. 1892, PSLEI/68, p. 7.

<sup>140</sup> IFP/3964, August 1891, Cons. 73, pp. 65-66; IFP/4393, Feb. 1893, Cons. 21, pp. 71-72; IFP/4399, Oct. 1893, Cons. 8-24, pp. 27-57.

<sup>141</sup> Note by Roberts, 4 August 1890, Roberts Papers/96/2, pp. 687-88.

<sup>142</sup> Lansdowne to Brackenbury, 10 Nov. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VII(f), pp. 180-81.

<sup>143</sup> IPWP/3930, April 1891, Cons. 158-68, pp. 1495-99.



Another group proposed a contribution by the Kashmir Darbar of all the labour required for the construction of the railway, but Lansdowne did not consider that feasible.<sup>144</sup> Actually, the negotiations for a mountain railway led nowhere, and the matter was consequently dropped.<sup>145</sup>

Meanwhile, on 2 April 1892, the General Member of the Council, Ghulam Mohi-ud-din, had died. At Prideaux's suggestion, his place on the Council was left vacant for some time, and Bhag Ram was entrusted with the General Department which was soon renamed the "Home Department". Even so, the improvement in the internal administration of the state, as the Resident reported, was "fairly maintained" during 1892-93.<sup>146</sup> The administration was for a time somewhat disorganised owing to outbreak of fire and cholera in Srinagar but the Maharaja and the members of the Council made "creditable endeavours" to fight the calamities. Before long substantial progress was recorded in almost all the departments of the state. Prideaux, however, did not remain long at the Residency to report on the success of the new administration. He proceeded on furlough in November 1892, and his place was filled by D.W.K. Barr, the Resident of Gwalior.<sup>147</sup> About this time certain other changes in the personnel of the Kashmir administration also took place. In October General de Bourbel had to retire from the service of the state; he was replaced by Charles Tickell, Under Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, in the public works department.<sup>148</sup> Still more important was the appointment of Muhammad Hyat Khan, a Divisional Judge of the Punjab to fill up the vacancy in the State Council created by Mohi-ud-din's death.<sup>149</sup>

All this went hand in hand with the progress of the reform measures which was considered satisfactory by the new Resident.

<sup>144</sup> IFP/4184, May 1892, Cons. 1-24, pp. 1-21.

<sup>145</sup> IPWP/3931, July 1891, No. 253, pp. 3322-23.

<sup>146</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1892-93, PSLEI/72, p. 271.

<sup>147</sup> IFP/4403, March 1893, Cons. 8-9, p. 3.

<sup>148</sup> IFP/4184, June 1892, Cons. 70-92, pp. 63-87.

<sup>149</sup> GI to SS, 5 April 1893, PSLEI/70, p. 3.

In the military department the improvements in the administration and condition of the state forces were well maintained. The efficiency of the Kashmir Imperial Service troops was again brought prominently to notice by the gallant behaviour of the 2nd Kashmir Rifles in the fighting at Chilas in March 1893.<sup>150</sup> Efforts were made to complete the equipment of the Imperial Service Troops ; but the military department was somewhat hampered by the want of funds, and progress was therefore necessarily slow. The working of the judicial department continued to be satisfactory, while the home department was well-supervised, especially its medical branch. They did some excellent work during the cholera epidemic at Srinagar in the summer of 1892, and that won them the approbation of the Government of India. Serious efforts were made by the education department to extend primary education which yielded good results. Hitherto education had been popular only amongst the Hindus, but by 1893 large numbers of Muslims as well as Rajput students began to attend the state schools.<sup>151</sup>

The settlement department, in particular, performed a commendable task—thanks to Lawrence and his able assistant, Narsing Dass. According to the annual report of the State Council, four more *tahsils* were properly assessed ; even the reclamation of waste lands was taken in hand. Lawrence also took some effective steps to revive the industry of sericulture,<sup>152</sup> and as Burr reported, they showed “fairly satisfactory results”.<sup>153</sup>

According to Prideaux's recommendations, the public works department was reorganised during the year. The Gilgit and Jhelum Valley roads were made independent charges—the former road under Captain J. E. Cappar of the Royal Engineers whose services were lent to the Council by the Government of India, and the latter under Baines. The maintenance of the exis-

<sup>150</sup> *Infra*, Chap. VII.

<sup>151</sup> Kashmir Admn. Report, 1892-93. PSLEI/72, p. 271.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> Resident to India, 28 Oct. 1893, *Ibid.*, p. 263. Villagers seemed more willing to take to this industry than to any other except of course that of paddy cultivation.

ting public works, and the preparation of plans and estimates for the future kept the department fully engaged throughout the official year, so that no important original works were begun or constructed.<sup>154</sup>

Admittedly, this progress was made possible by the exertions of the Maharaja and his Council. On the whole, they maintained cordial relations, and diligently discharged their duties to the state and its people. The new Resident bore testimony to their efforts which met with considerable success :

“The meetings of the Council have been held regularly and with praiseworthy punctuality. The relations between the Maharaja and the Members of the Council have been good, and the Maharaja, as President of the Council, has set a good example by devoting himself very earnestly to the duties of his important office ; and while the administration has been fairly conducted in all its branches, the State Council have exercised a strong and, on the whole, judicious control over the government of the State.”<sup>155</sup>

Before Lansdowne's retirement from the Viceregal office, Pratap Singh once again appealed for his complete restoration to what he called “the plenary powers that appertain to my rank and station.”<sup>156</sup> He claimed full credit for the reforms and improvement that were introduced in the administration of the state, and urged the Viceroy to ‘rescue’ him from the indignity of partial restoration. But Lansdowne, though recognising Pratap Singh's share in carrying out reforms in the state, was yet unwilling to admit that all improvement was due alone to the Maharaja's efforts. In fact, he was still not convinced that the Maharaja was free from the influence of his evil advisers,

<sup>154</sup> IFP/4182, Oct. 1892, Cons. 28-62, pp. 15-28; IFP/4184, June 1892, Cons. 70-92, pp. 63-87.

<sup>155</sup> Resident to India, 28 Oct. 1893, PSLEI/72, p. 263.

<sup>156</sup> Pratap Singh to Lansdowne, 25 Aug. 1893. Lansdowne Papers/VII(j), pp. 173-75.

and apprehended that a compliance with Pratap's request "would merely effect a transfer of power from the hands of responsible and experienced officers into those of worthless subordinates." Even so, he assured Pratap Singh that his successor to the Viceroyalty, and the Government of India, would continue to support him in any measures that might be best adapted for the good of his state and for the maintenance of his position and dignity.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Lansdowne to Pratap Singh, 30 Sept. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/VII(j), pp. 177-78(a).

## THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GILGIT AGENCY 1881-89

As we have seen, the Gilgit Agency had been withdrawn by Lord Ripon in 1881 because Biddulph, the Political Agent at Gilgit, had failed to secure any influence over the neighbouring chiefships or even trustworthy information about affairs on the northern frontier of Kashmir. But the withdrawal was by no means considered final ; the Government of India reserved full discretion to send back an officer to Gilgit if that should be considered necessary. The Maharaja was further informed that his relations with the states on the northern frontier could not but be a matter of permanent concern to the Indian Government. He would therefore be expected to supply early and accurate information on the course of events in that region. Ripon availed himself of the withdrawal of the Gilgit Agent to raise and strengthen the status of the Officer on Special Duty in Kashmir, and the Maharaja was asked to consult him on all matters affecting the relations of his state with any one of the adjoining chiefships.<sup>1</sup>

Although Hartington approved of Ripon's measure,<sup>2</sup> there was a strong feeling at the India Office that the Amir of Afghanistan was disposed to bring some of the states and tribes on the Kashmir frontier under his influence—an attitude which could not be long ignored by the Government of India.<sup>3</sup> For that reason the withdrawal of the Gilgit Agent was considered inexpedient ; as Burne, the Secretary of the Political and Secret Department, remarked, it meant the removal of "a sentry from

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<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup> Hartington to Ripon, 10 Dec. 1880, Ripon Papers/Add. MSS 43566, ff. 13-17.

<sup>3</sup> I.O. Minute, Dec. 1881, PSDI/7, pp. 437-40; PSHC/48, pp. 747 (a)-(b). In fact, in May 1881 Abdur Rahman had made overtures to Aman-ul-Mulk, the Mehtar of Chitral, for a closer understanding between his state and the latter's. PFP/1625, July 1881, No. 51, pp. 946-47.

a vulnerable point of the Indian frontier".<sup>4</sup> This sentiment found expression in Hartington's official despatch that sanctioned the measure adopted by Ripon's Government :

"....it cannot be overlooked that the effect of the withdrawal of the agent may possibly be practically to close a valuable channel of information as to the course of events in the countries between Kashmir and Russian Turkestan, at a moment when such information is likely to be of particular interest.... In the event .... of the Maharaja failing to keep you informed of what is passing on his borders.... it might be necessary to reconsider the expediency of deputing an officer to Gilgit, at all events during the summer months."<sup>5</sup>

Evidently, the concluding part of the India Office despatch was based upon the suggestion of Ripon's Government to send back an officer to Gilgit in case of necessity. Curiously, this was not Ripon's private sentiment. In a demi-official letter to Hartington he demurred against the above passage in the India Office despatch, and hoped that the Secretary of State would never ask him to take recourse to such a measure :

"I am convinced that to send any one back there would be a mistake ; the whole idea is a pure piece of Lyttonian policy."<sup>6</sup>

In fact, the policy that was underlined in the official despatch of the Government of India, sent home for the approval of the Secretary of State, was largely influenced by Lyall, Ripon's Foreign Secretary. No doubt, he approved of the withdrawal of the Gilgit Agent, but recorded at the same time for the Viceroy's consideration that the measure was merely a temporary expedient, and its continuance would only depend upon the Maharaja's

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<sup>4</sup> PSDI/7, pp. 331-37.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 339-44.

<sup>6</sup> Ripon to Hartington, 6 Oct. 1881, Ripon Papers/I.S. 290/5, Vol. II, p. 233.

capacity to preserve the influence of the Indian Government in the regions beyond his northern frontiers.<sup>7</sup>

Not that Ripon was not aware of the limitations of his own policy. He was very much alive to the Afghan pretensions to suzerainty over territories to the north-west of Kashmir. He was equally susceptible to the continuous advance of Russia in Central Asia to which Hartington had drawn his attention in August 1881.<sup>8</sup> He himself doubted the ability of the Kashmir Darbar to control the remote and unruly tribes on their northern frontier;<sup>9</sup> he was aware that all his 'admonitions' about the Kashmir State had not borne much fruit.<sup>10</sup> Although, Abdur Rahman disavowed all his aggressive intentions on Chitral in July 1881, some months later he reasserted his claims to suzerainty over Aman-ul-Mulk, the Mehtar of Chitral.<sup>11</sup> Ripon of course did not believe that the Amir, in view of his preoccupations at home, would be of much trouble to Aman or the Maharaja.<sup>12</sup> All the same, he warned Abdur Rahman that the British Government was bound by treaty obligations to recognise Kashmir's suzerainty over Chitral, and that therefore his violation of Aman's territories would be considered by them an unfriendly act.<sup>13</sup>

Even so, Ripon was reluctant to follow a more active policy in relation to the tribes on the Kashmir border, such as was advocated by Colonel Waterfield, the Commissioner of Peshawar. Waterfield suggested the inclusion of the entire tribal belt to the east of Afghanistan within the sphere of British influence by declaring them independent of Kabul, and guaranteeing their independence.<sup>14</sup> At about this time there was indeed a

<sup>7</sup> Note by Alfred Lyall, 13 June 1881, Ripon Papers/Add. MSS. 43575, f. 44.

<sup>8</sup> Hartington to Ripon, 31 August 1881, Ripon Papers/Add. MSS. 43567, ff. 61-66.

<sup>9</sup> GI to SS, 25 August 1882, PSLEI/33, pp. 949-52.

<sup>10</sup> Ripon to Hartington, 22 Oct. 1881, Ripon Papers/I.S. 290/5, Vol. II, pp. 238-40.

<sup>11</sup> Encl. 25 in GI to SS, 25 Aug. 1882, PSLEI/33.

<sup>12</sup> Ripon to Hartington, 10 April 1882, Ripon Papers/I.S. 290/5, Vol. III, pp. 84-87.

<sup>13</sup> Note by Viceroy, 15 April 1882, Ripon Papers/I.S. 290/8, Vol. V, p. 128, Gopal, S. *The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon* (London 1953), p. 38.

<sup>14</sup> Encl. 41 in GI to SS, 4 Aug. 1882, PSLEI/33, pp. 562-68.

distinct feeling in the Indian Foreign Office that a uniform and active policy should be formulated with regard to the entire tribal belt along the north-west frontier.<sup>15</sup> Ripon was prepared to recognise the independence of these tribes including those of Swat, Bajaur and Chitral, but he was very much averse to guaranteeing that independence.<sup>16</sup> He apprehended that any direct interference with the tribes on the Kashmir frontier would arouse the suspicion of the Maharaja and encourage him to intrigue against the Indian Government.<sup>17</sup> Rightly or wrongly, he felt that the policy of controlling the tribes on the north-west frontier of Kashmir through the Maharaja was "the only practicable policy" left open to his Government ; he indeed hoped that eventually that policy would prove successful.<sup>18</sup>

Ripon's expectation, however, was far from being fulfilled. The inability of the Maharaja to maintain his influence over the states on the Kashmir frontier was clearly demonstrated during the Hunza and Nagar disturbances of 1882. Henvey, the Officer on Special Duty at the Kashmir Darbar, complained of the Maharaja's lack of frankness to keep him informed of the course of events beyond the northern frontier. The Darbar had agreed to do so at the time of the withdrawal of the Gilgit Agency, so that Henvey was instructed to remind the Maharaja of his obligations to "maintain constant watchfulness over events on the frontier", and to convey "the fullest and earliest information regarding all such matters".<sup>19</sup> The right of information was claimed according to the conditions of the treaty of Amritsar, 1846.<sup>20</sup> The Kashmir ruler was further reminded that he had undertaken in 1881 to take no step in regard to his external relations without reference to the Officer on Special Duty.

Despite Ripon's warnings to Abdur Rahman the latter had not given up his claims to Chitral ; he even tried to establish his

<sup>15</sup> K.W. No. 1, Aug. 1882, Ripon Papers/Add. MSS. 43576, ff. 534-36.

<sup>16</sup> Ripon to Hartington, 21 Aug. 1881, Ripon Papers/I.S. 290/5, Vol.II, pp. 83-84.

<sup>17</sup> Ripon to Hartington, 22 Oct. 1881, *ibid.*, pp. 238-40.

<sup>18</sup> GI to SS, 25 August 1882, PSLEI/33, pp. 949-52.

<sup>19</sup> GI to SS, 25 Sept. 1882, and enclosures, *ibid.*, pp. 1723-48.

<sup>20</sup> According to the treaty (art. IX), the British Indian Government had undertaken to protect the state from foreign aggression, and was entitled to such information.



suzerainty over the neighbouring chiefships of Bajaur, Swat and Dir.<sup>21</sup> But the British Government had never recognised the pretensions of the Amir to these territories, and although Abdur Rahman denied all aggressive intentions on his part, there was a strong feeling at the India Office that Ripon's Government should be urged to warn the Afghan ruler again in a very clear language.<sup>22</sup> Kimberley did so, and his instructions were immediately complied with by Lord Ripon. The Amir was once again told that Bajaur, Swat and Dir, like Chitral, were regarded by the Government of India "as being beyond the proper limits of Afghan influence".<sup>23</sup> But this did not seem to have produced any effect upon Abdur Rahman. Reports received in the last year of Ripon's Viceroyalty were full of Afghan intrigues in these states.<sup>24</sup> Rumours were even rife that the Amir intended to annex Swat and Bajaur, and extend his influence right up to Gilgit. Aman-ul-Mulk was very apprehensive of the Amir's proceedings. He asked more than once for British protection against the Afghan Chief and the deputation of a British agent to Chitral.<sup>25</sup>

Even more important than the Afghan intrigues was the steady advance of Russia in Central Asia that urged upon the consideration of Ripon's Government the question of defence of the northern frontier. The continuous drive of the Russian armies towards the Oxus and the northern frontier of Afghanistan had for long been a source of anxiety to British statesmen. The pressure was not relaxed in the early eighties; Russian engineers surveyed the region between Sarakhs and the Herat frontier and Russian agents visited Merv.<sup>26</sup> It was reported from St. Petersburg that there was a project to connect the Caspian with the Russian possessions on the Upper Oxus by a light railway.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>21</sup> PCD, 1 July 1883, 17 July 1883, and 1 August 1883, PSLEI/37, pp. 311, 649, and 1007.

<sup>22</sup> I.O. Minute, Oct. 1883, PSHC/59, pp. 599-600.

<sup>23</sup> GI to SS, 8 Jan. 1884, PSLEI/39, p. 123, and encl. 18 in *ibid.*, p. 160.

<sup>24</sup> MINWF, March 1884, PSLEI/40, p. 91.

<sup>25</sup> GI to SS, 29 Aug. 1884, and encls. 6 and 12, PSLEI/41, pp. 1083-90; PCD, 10 Nov. 1884, PSLEI/42, p. 859.

<sup>26</sup> Tel. Thompson to Ripon, 27 Nov. 1882, Ripon Papers/I.S. 290/8, Vol. VI, No. 354, p. 285.

<sup>27</sup> Encl. in Kennedy to Granville, 12 Sept. 1883, PSHC/59, p. 363.

Before long Russian travellers visited even the Alichur and the Great Pamirs. In the face of the increasing activities of Russia both the Home and the Indian Governments began to consider measures to check her. A Russian advance to Merv was expected and to forestall this, Hartington suggested its occupation by Persia. But both Ripon and his Council were opposed to such an idea. Ripon thought "that it must have issued from the same mint as that which produced Salisbury's famous plan for giving Herat to Persia".<sup>28</sup> He saw no harm in Russian occupation of Merv, and proposed a treaty with that power binding her not to interfere in Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup> The matter was discussed in the British Cabinet and rejected ; in fact, the authorities at Whitehall failed to arrive at a definite policy on Central Asia. The result was that the Russian advance continued unabated, and in February 1884 Merv fell to the Czar. This suddenly awakened all concerned to the necessity of active preparations. Ripon even considered measures that would be necessary in case of a war. Eventually, however, an agreement was reached with Russia for the delimitation of the Afghan frontier, and the tension subsided for the time being.<sup>30</sup>

If Ripon failed to cope with the intrigues of Abdur Rahman and obtain a treaty with Russia, he took a definite measure as part of his scheme of imperial defence. That, as already mentioned, was his decision to appoint a permanent British Resident in Kashmir. Of course the measure was dictated as much by imperial considerations as by internal maladministration in the state. Yet, indeed, "the increasing importance to the Government of India of watching events beyond the North-Western frontier of Kashmir" forced the liberal Viceroy to suggest a measure which, when adopted, caused greater indignation to the Kashmir ruler than that produced by Lytton's Agency at Gilgit.

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<sup>28</sup> Ripon to Hartington, 3 Feb. 1882, Ripon Papers/I.S. 290/5, Vol. III, p. 27; 17 Feb. 1882, *ibid.*, pp. 34-35. For the scheme of handing over Herat to Persia, Ghose, D. K. *op. cit.*, Chap. III.

<sup>29</sup> Memo. of Ripon, 2 Sept. 1881, encl. with letter to Hartington of the same date, Ripon Papers/I.S. 290/5, Vol. II, No. 43, pp. 196-97.

<sup>30</sup> Gopal, S. *op. cit.*, pp. 35-38 ; Ghose, D. K. *op. cit.*, p. 141.

Towards Afghanistan Dufferin followed the same policy as Ripon had done. He agreed with Aitchison and Lyall that the Amir's pretensions to suzerainty over territories like Swat and Bajaur must be withstood.<sup>31</sup> Although Kimberley, the Secretary of State for India, shared Dufferin's views in this respect, he enquired of the Viceroy at the time of the Rawalpindi Conference whether the territories in question could be given to Abdur Rahman as a gift, provided he agreed to meet the wishes of the British Government in regard to the general settlement of the Afghan frontier.<sup>32</sup> Dufferin was willing to consider this, but Aitchison, the Punjab Governor, was strongly opposed to it. He considered that no territory that outflanked Peshawar could be left in the Amir's possession, lest the security of the entire valley should be endangered.<sup>33</sup> Fortunately, the question was not raised by the Amir at Rawalpindi, and the matter was consequently dropped without any discussion. But Abdur Rahman tried to exploit his meeting with the Viceroy both on his way back home and afterwards. He wrote and talked as if Dufferin had given him a blank cheque in Swat and Bajaur.<sup>34</sup> This annoyed the tribes, and by the middle of 1885 the Chiefs of these states along with that of Dir offered their allegiance to the Indian Government, asking in return for its protection against Abdur Rahman.<sup>35</sup> Dufferin, true to Ripon's policy, recognised their independence, but refused to guarantee it except by way of a mild warning to the Amir.<sup>36</sup>

If the Afghan intrigues on the Kashmir frontiers continued to be a source of trouble to the Indian Government, the steady expansion of Russia in Central Asia soon led to a serious reconsideration of the question of imperial defence. With the

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<sup>31</sup> Dufferin to Kimberley, 23 December 1884, Dufferin Papers/Reel 517, pp. 3-6.

<sup>32</sup> Kimberley to Dufferin, 6 March 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 517, p. 32.

<sup>33</sup> Aitchison to Dufferin, 4 Jan. 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 528, pp. 37-41.

<sup>34</sup> MINWF, June 1885, PSLEI/44, p. 1112; PCD, 16 June 1885, *ibid.*, pp. 1070-71.

<sup>35</sup> PFP/2473, July 1885, Cons. 17 and enclosures, pp. 213-14.

<sup>36</sup> Dufferin to Churchill, 28 Sept. 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 517, pp. 224-25. In June 1885, the new British Agent at Kabul was asked to warn the Amir that Afghan intrigues on the Kashmir frontier would not be tolerated.

Panjdeh crisis in March 1885 the agreement between England and Russia, which Ripon had obtained for a settlement of the Afghan boundary, almost reached breaking point. A war seemed imminent between the two European powers. Dufferin was not prepared to ignore the "Russian challenge", and "ordered all preparations to be conducted as quietly as possible". Donald Stewart was asked to be ready "to take the chief command" in any emergency. Fortunately the war was averted, as the Panjdeh issue was submitted to arbitration. But the preparations for war were pushed forward by the Indian Government. In fact, a feeling gradually gained ground that the settlement with Russia over the Panjdeh issue was a truce which merely afforded a "breathing time" to both the powers.<sup>37</sup> This was also Kimberley's view ; to Dufferin he wrote :

"...whatever smooth things Russian dipolmatists may say, ... we must look to our own defence, and not trust to any assurances or paper securities against designs which are now scarcely, if at all, disguised. Russia is above all things military, and the military party in Russia mean mischief."<sup>38</sup>

Dufferin agreed with him and appointed a committee<sup>39</sup> in order to determine upon "a complete and thorough plan" for the defence of the north-west frontier. Simultaneously, he sent Colonel Lockhart, the Deputy Quarter-Master-General, on an expedition *via* Gilgit and Chitral to explore the passes of the Hindu Kush. Another mission was sent to Chinese Turkestan under the famous explorer, Ney Elias, for a similar purpose.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Napier of Magdala to Dufferin, 1 Oct. 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 525, pp. 112-13 ; from W.H. White, Asst. Director of the Central Department of the Admiralty, encl. in 16 (a), *ibid.*, pp. 14(a)-(b).

<sup>38</sup> Kimberley to Dufferin, 6 March 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 517, p. 32.

<sup>39</sup> The Defence Committee consisted of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Donald Stewart (and after Stewart's retirement in November 1885, Sir Frederick Roberts), Sir George Chesney, the Military Member of the Viceroy's Council, Sir Charles Macgregor, Quarter-Master-General, Major-General Edwin Collen, the Secretary to Government in the Military Department, and Major (afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel) W. G. Nicholson, R. E., as Secretary. Roberts writes that it also consisted of the heads of Departments with the Government of India and at Army Head Quarters. *Forty-one Years in India* (London 1917), Vol. II, p. 424.

<sup>40</sup> Dufferin to Kimberley, 29 May 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 517, p. 139 ; Durand, A. G. *The Making of a Frontier* (London 1899), p. 4.

The Defence Committee recommended, *inter alia*, that precautions should be taken to meet, or forestall, an isolated attack upon Kashmir. With that end in view, they strongly pressed that the road already in course of construction between Rawalpindi and Srinagar should be completed as a good cart road without delay. It should be further extended from Srinagar to Gilgit and Chitral as a cart road as far as practicable, and onward as a good mule road.<sup>41</sup> Dufferin shared the view of his military experts that the road was necessary and recommended the measure to the Home Government.<sup>42</sup> About the same time the Viceroy also considered the desirability of establishing a British cantonment in Kashmir. On that point he consulted Roberts who had meantime succeeded Stewart as the Commander-in-Chief in India. Roberts at first welcomed the idea, but on second thoughts expressed his doubts about the wisdom and necessity of the proposal "from a purely military point of view". He felt that unless further exploration showed that the Kashmir frontier was easily assailable from the north, it would be advisable, especially in view of the opposition of the Kashmir Darbar, not to station British troops in the valley. He of course admitted that he was not aware of the necessity of such a measure on political grounds "which would outweigh" all other considerations.<sup>43</sup> Similar doubts were expressed about the value of the Punjab-Kashmir road beyond Srinagar when the recommendations of the Defence Committee were examined by a joint War and India Office Committee in London.<sup>44</sup> The net result was that in October 1885, the Secretary of State for India enquired of the Viceroy whether it was on military or political grounds that he recommended the proposal.<sup>45</sup>

To be able to suggest a definite course of action Dufferin submitted the report of the Defence Committee for the opinion of his new Commander-in-Chief, and Charles Macgregor, the Quarter-Master-General in India. Roberts agreed with the

<sup>41</sup> Memo. of the Defence Committee, 2 June 1885, PSHC/81, pp. 975-80.

<sup>42</sup> GI to SS, 10 July 1885, *ibid.*, pp. 967-74.

<sup>43</sup> Chamberlain to Durand, 3 Jan. 1886, Roberts Papers/R98/1, pp. 3-4.

<sup>44</sup> W.O. 32/263/40233 ; also, Greaves, R. *Persia and the Defence of India*, 1884-92, (London 1959), p. 38.

<sup>45</sup> SS to GI, 15 Oct. 1885, PSHC/81, pp. 961-64.

recommendation of the Defence Committee that adequate precautions ought to be taken to meet or forestall an attack upon Kashmir. For that purpose he suggested that "we should have political control over the country round Chitral and Gilgit in order to secure the approaches to the former by the Dora Pass, and to the latter through Wakhan".<sup>46</sup> Both Macgregor and he recognised the importance of the Rawalpindi-Kashmir road, and urged its early completion. Roberts approved of the road being pushed towards Chitral; Macgregor suggested that it should at least be continued to Gilgit. Evidently, both of them stressed the strategic importance of both Gilgit and Chitral in any scheme of Indian defence, and in so doing Roberts certainly deviated from his early opinion on the subject. Macgregor even urged that the passes of the Hindu Kush into Chitral should be prepared for defence by field works.<sup>47</sup> Strengthened again by the views of his military advisers, Dufferin urged upon the Home Government the necessity of completing the Kashmir road up to Chitral on military grounds :

"In view of the strategical importance of Gilgit, and to a lesser degree of Chitral, we consider that the original proposals should be adhered to, and carried out with as little delay as possible."<sup>48</sup>

Upon this representation, the Secretary of State for India sanctioned the road, but only up to Gilgit for the time being.<sup>49</sup>

Meanwhile, Colonel Lockhart, accompanied by Colonel Woodthorpe of the Survey of India and several others, had travelled north of the Kashmir frontiers and explored the passes of the Hindu Kush. Lockhart's instructions were, first, to obtain full information regarding Chitral and the neighbouring districts, including of course the routes and passes leading through and from it. Secondly, he was asked to penetrate into Kafiristan and explore it thoroughly, with the object of gaining the goodwill

<sup>46</sup> Note by Roberts, 22 June 1886, Roberts Papers/96/1, pp. 89-101.

<sup>47</sup> Note by Macgregor, 23 May 1885, PSM/A117.

<sup>48</sup> GI to SS, 4 Oct. 1886, PFP/2923, April 1887, Frontier A, Cons. 1.

<sup>49</sup> SS to GI, 27 Jan. 1887, *ibid.*, Cons. 2.

of the inhabitants of that country, and securing all possible information regarding the passes leading from Kafiristan across the Hindu Kush.<sup>50</sup> In the summer of 1885 the Mission travelled *via* Gilgit and Chitral up to the Dora Pass, and tried "to penetrate and explore Kafiristan". But the Kafirs obstructed their passage so that the party was obliged to return to Gilgit *via* Chitral. In April 1886, the party visited Hunza and the Kilik Pass and travelled up to the Taghdumbash and Little Pamirs. They explored the northern approach to the Baroghil, and then made another attempt to penetrate into Kafiristan. The Amir had earlier given permission to the party to travel through his territories in Badakshan, but subsequently withdrew it in spite of Dufferin's request to the contrary, with the result that the Mission was stopped at Kila Panja by its governor. This gave rise to rumours of the detention of Lockhart's party at Badakshan, and questions were even asked in the House of Commons.<sup>51</sup> As the rumours spread the Russians became suspicious of the Mission ; anxious enquiries were made at the British embassy at St. Petersburg regarding its objects.<sup>52</sup> In the face of Russia's annoyance and the Amir's refusal to allow the Mission a passage through his territories, the Secretary of State for India asked Dufferin to consider the advisability of withdrawing the expedition.<sup>53</sup> Meanwhile, at Roberts' suggestion, it had been decided to appoint Lockhart to act as Quarter-Master-General in place of General Chapman who went on sick leave. On July 19, Lockhart returned to Gilgit *via* the Dora Pass and Chitral and then left for Simla. His party under Colonel Woodthorpe was joined by Ney Elias at Zebak ; thereafter they all came back to India.<sup>54</sup>

Lockhart demonstrated that the Baroghil Pass which had hitherto been considered to be "the easiest avenue to Gilgit" did not really lead to that place or anywhere else "by any

<sup>50</sup> Cunningham to Lockhart, 6 June 1885, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 28 August 1885, PSLEI/45, pp. 403-04.

<sup>51</sup> Hansard, Third Series, CCCVII, 21 June 1886, Cols. 59-60.

<sup>52</sup> Morier to Rosebery, 20 June 1886, and 10 July 1886, PSHC/87, pp. 423 and 1209.

<sup>53</sup> SS to GI, 26 June 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 519, p. 190.

<sup>54</sup> MINWF, July 1886, PSLEI/47, pp. 1125-32 ; Viceroy to SS, 26 July 1886, PSHC/87, p. 1293.

practicable route for pack animals". The easiest route to Chitral from the side of Badakshan was the Dora Pass which was about 14,800 feet high. Even then the difficulties of the routes south of the passes were such that Lockhart came to the conclusion

"that without unlimited time and unlimited labour resources the feat of crossing an army over the section of the Hindu Kush visited by myself was an impossibility."

He of course admitted that small bands of troops could come across the mountain barriers during two brief periods in spring and autumn, but he thought that this would not seriously threaten the security of the northern frontiers. In his opinion, the danger was not really one of invasion, but of mischief, which was likely to be caused by the appearance of lightly armed troops coming across the Hindu Kush. It was to encounter this mischief that Lockhart suggested the establishment of a British Agency at Gilgit ; he hoped that with an Agent of "the proper stamp" there would be no danger in that quarter.<sup>55</sup>

For Chitral he recommended the appointment of a native agent to ensure the continued loyalty of the Mehtar. For the defence of that place he suggested the construction of a military road from Peshawar through Dir and Chitral to the Dora Pass, and the enlistment of a mobile scout force for blocking the passes in an emergency. This force was to be supported by an artillery battery from the Punjab and nineteen British officers. The defence of Gilgit, on the other hand, should be assumed by the Government of India and no Kashmir troops ought to be employed there.<sup>56</sup>

If Lockhart stressed the importance of Gilgit as the defensive nucleus of Dardistan and suggested that the ruler of Chitral should be controlled by an Indian agent, Elias had no faith

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<sup>55</sup> Lockhart's note on the Hindu Kush Passes, 9 March 1888, PSM/A79.

<sup>56</sup> Lockhart and Woodthorpe, *Gilgit Mission* (London 1889), p. 109, pp. 275-80, and p. 348.



either in Aman-ul-Mulk's loyalty to the British, or in his capacity to check the Russians :

"It is obvious, from a political point of view, that any measure for obtaining a grip on Chitral and the approach from Badakshan, must be undertaken from the Punjab and not from Gilgit."<sup>57</sup>

Dufferin's Government, however, took no notice of Elias' opinion ; Lockhart's scheme was rejected on financial grounds.<sup>58</sup>

In spite of Dufferin's warning to Abdur Rahman, the Amir had meanwhile continued to intrigue with the tribal chiefs on the Kashmir frontier. Reports of his intention to annex Bajaur, Swat, Dir and the Shinwari country were frequently received at Peshawar.<sup>59</sup> In August 1886, it was reported that the Amir was taking measures to annex to Kunar some of the passes held by independent tribes with a view to facilitating an advance upon Kafiristan, Chitral and Bajaur.<sup>60</sup> In short, the Afghan menace continued to grow, and this so far frightened the independent Chiefships that Aman-ul-Mulk pressed hard for a treaty with the British Government ; he was even anxious to receive a resident British Officer at Chitral.<sup>61</sup> The rulers of Dir and Jandol were unnerved by the Amir's proclaimed intentions against Swat and Bajaur, and made friendly overtures to the British Government for protection against him.<sup>62</sup> Dufferin was still unwilling to extend the liability of his Government in regard to the frontier Chiefships. But a reconsideration of the tribal policy of the Government of India could not be long postponed owing to more serious developments in other quarters.

While the Indian authorities were engaged in considering the problem of defence against Russia's aggression, reports

<sup>57</sup> Elias, N. *Report of a Mission* (Calcutta 1886), p. 102.

<sup>58</sup> GI to SS, 6 May 1889, Lansdowne Papers/LB(i), p. 547 ; Durand, A.G. *op. cit.*, p. 119.

<sup>59</sup> MINWF, June 1886, PSLEI/47, p. 844 ; PCD, 12 Oct. 1886, PSLEI/48, pp. 823-31.

<sup>60</sup> PCD, 26 August 1886, PSLEI/48, pp. 73-80.

<sup>61</sup> MINWF, June 1887, PSLEI/50, pp. 1229-45.

<sup>62</sup> PFP/2700, June 1886, Frontier B, Cons. 7-11.

were received of her intrigues along the Kashmir frontier.<sup>63</sup> There was even a strong opinion in Peshawar that the Russians were contemplating an advance by the Baroghil pass to occupy Yasin, and that the rulers of Chitral and Yarkand had concluded an alliance with Russia.<sup>64</sup> All this might not have been true, but there indeed was a possibility of war between England and Russia in the middle of 1885. A deadlock was reached in the negotiations for the Afghan frontier, and there was a marked preparedness on both sides for an outbreak of hostilities.<sup>65</sup> The war clouds, of course, soon receded, but the Russian intrigues in Central Asia continued unceasingly.<sup>66</sup> Kimberley, and after him Cross, was anxious on this account, and drew Dufferin's attention to Russia's misdemeanour. But, personally, the Viceroy did not believe that the Russians at the moment were engaged in intrigues against the Indian Government. He thought that Russia's hands were too full with Bulgarian affairs to allow her to make a war in Central Asia.<sup>67</sup>

Even so, Dufferin agreed with Cross that China would always be "a powerful factor" in any dispute with Russia, and even seriously considered a Chinese alliance against her. In fact, when the Panjdeh crisis seriously threatened the peace in Central Asia and the relations between England and Russia considerably deteriorated, China showed an inclination to come closer to England. She was annoyed on account of Kashgar and Korea, the security of which seemed threatened by Russian proceedings in those regions. The Governor of Singapore was approached by the Chinese for an alliance with England against Russia,<sup>68</sup> and but for the Burmese embroglio Dufferin would have perhaps considered the proposal at that stage.

<sup>63</sup> A.O. Hume to Dufferin, 16 June 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 528, pp. 324-25.

<sup>64</sup> PCD, 31 May 1885, PSLEI/44, p. 864.

<sup>65</sup> Ghose, D. K. *op.cit.*, pp. 203-04.

<sup>66</sup> PCD, 5 Sept. 1885, PSLEI/45, p. 754.

<sup>67</sup> Kimberley to Dufferin, 9 July 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 517, p. 70; Cross to Dufferin, 6 Oct. 1886, *ibid.*, p. 105; Dufferin to Cross, 16 Nov. 1886, *ibid.*, p. 228. For the Bulgarian affairs, Taylor, A.J.P. *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe* (Oxford 1954), Chap. XIV.

<sup>68</sup> Governor, Singapore, to Viceroy, 12 April 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 528, p. 207. For Chinese anxieties over Korea, Boulger, D.C. *The Life of Sir Halliday Macartney* (London 1908), pp. 417 and 444.

However, with the Burmese question seemingly settled in 1886, he thought that

“the time has come for the Government of India seriously to consider the best means of improving its relations with China, and of paving the way for obtaining her cooperation in the event of a war with Russia”.<sup>69</sup>

The idea of course did not materialise on account of the subsequent development of the Burmo-Chinese boundary question,<sup>70</sup> but in 1886 a common sentiment was certainly shared by both the Home and the Indian authorities that Chinese friendship should be cultivated as an offset against Muscovite expansion in Asia.<sup>71</sup>

In spite of Dufferin's optimism about Russia, reports of her warlike activities continued to pour in from time to time. Knowledgeable men apprehended a probable massing of Russian troops in Central Asia. Russian surveyors were found in Shignan accompanied by armed escorts. Reports were received that the Czar was making preparations for the navigation of the Oxus.<sup>72</sup> The trans-Caspian Railway was making rapid progress, and it was feared that on its completion Russian forces would be massed in Central Asia “with a view to threatening India”.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Dufferin's Memorandum, 18 Sept. 1886, Dufferin Papers/Reel 529, p. 102.

<sup>70</sup> After the annexation of Burma in 1885 a convention was signed between the English and the Chinese on 24 July 1886 providing for the delimitation of the Burmo-Chinese boundary. But an amicable settlement was delayed by two factors : first, the question of a decennial mission, and secondly, local disputes based upon the question of ownership of the tribal regions upon the Burmese border. Practically, it was not till the end of Lord Lansdowne's Viceroyalty that a satisfactory agreement could be arrived at. *Vide* FO 17/1064 and 17/1065, FO 97/554, FO 17/1150-52 and 1175-77.

<sup>71</sup> FO/1062 generally ; Durand's Memo. on C. Asia, 21 May 1887, Cross Papers/22, encl. in No. 43.

<sup>72</sup> Letter from a Correspondent in St. Petersburg, April 1886, PSDOC/1, First Series, pp. 1121-23.

<sup>73</sup> PCD, 12 Oct. 1886, PSLEI/48, pp. 823-31, MINWF, Oct. 1886, *ibid.*, pp. 895-98; St. John to Durand 10 Nov. 1886, *ibid.*, pp. 1157-58. The fear was justified sooner than it was expected. In May 1887, 5000 Russian troops and 2000 Cossacks were placed in and around Charjui. PSHC/96, pp. 715-17; Lansdell, H. *Through Central Asia* (London 1887), pp. 633-34; Dobson, G. *Russia's Railway Advance* (London 1890), p. 413.

Waterfield, the Peshawar Commissioner, even suspected that a Russian emissary was working in Bajaur and Chitral in the interest of the Czar. Not long afterwards, three Russian officers, disguised as merchants, were reported to have visited Kashmir and taken notes of the different routes to that state.<sup>74</sup> What was worse, reports were received from Peshawar and other frontier districts that Russia had sent two spies to India—one to Bombay and another to Calcutta—for the purpose of collecting information and fomenting trouble against the British Government.<sup>75</sup> The situation was still more complicated when Dalip Singh entered the vortex of Russian politics. Although Dufferin still believed that Russia could hardly afford a war with England in Central Asia—and mainly in view of her pre-occupations in Europe—he could not but agree with the Secretary of State for India that the policy of his government must be “steady and unceasing preparation to put ourselves in a complete state of defence”. As he wrote to Cross,

“Under any circumstances, we must not shut our eyes to the fact that in the north-west we are dealing with an excitable and credulous population and that if the Russians were to come with Dhulip Singh in their right hand, the rumour of such a circumstance would undoubtedly have an inconvenient effect.”<sup>76</sup>

In any case, “the establishment of such a Power as Russia in strength and security” in close proximity of the Indian Empire could not but produce “very momentous, if not disastrous, consequences, especially when so uncertain and unknown a quantity as Afghanistan and the adjacent border tribes form an essential element of the problem...”<sup>77</sup>

When the Viceroy was thus exercised in his mind, and consulting his Commander-in-Chief as to the best mode of

<sup>74</sup> MINWF, January 1887, PSLEI/49, pp. 371-81.

<sup>75</sup> PCD, 12 Oct. 1886, PSLEI/48, pp. 823-31; MINWF, Oct. 1886, *ibid.*, pp. 985-93.

<sup>76</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 22 Feb. 1887, Cross Papers/22, No. 29.

<sup>77</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 3 June 1887, *ibid.*, No. 44.

defence of the Indian Empire,<sup>78</sup> Mortimer Durand, his Foreign Secretary, proceeded to lay down his personal opinion on the question.<sup>79</sup> He observed that the establishment of Russian posts within striking distance of the Indian Empire necessitated a thorough reconsideration of "our future course of policy". The question of safeguarding the northern frontier received his particular attention, because he believed that if the Government of India were in serious difficulties with Russia, Kashmir would be "more or less shaky and inclined to hedge". He recommended the re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency under one or more English officers, assisted by a good corps of Dogras raised from Kashmir, and some additional levies raised from small Muhammadan chiefships of the neighbourhood. From Gilgit efforts should be made to cultivate the friendship of the tribes on the Kashmir frontier, and a direct road to Chitral *via* Dir ought to be opened to facilitate communication between British territories and the Kashmir frontier.

Both Roberts and Chesney, the military member of Dufferin's Council, concurred in Durand's proposals for the defence of the northern frontier, and heartily welcomed the idea of Indian Princes contributing from their resources to the general defence of the Indian Empire. Roberts agreed with Lockhart that although a large army might not be able to reach India by the Gilgit-Chitral route, the appearance of small bodies of Russian troops in the midst of the frontier Chiefships under the Hindu Kush would produce a disquieting effect throughout India. Chesney emphasised that "under no circumstances can the advance of Russia beyond the Hindu Kush be permitted".<sup>80</sup> Roberts, in particular, was in complete agreement with all of Durand's recommendations, and even considered the road to Chitral through Dir to be the "most important" factor in frontier defence.<sup>81</sup>

The authorities at Whitehall, too, were favourably impressed by Durand's memorandum. The re-establishment of the Gilgit

<sup>78</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 1 May 1887, *ibid.*, No. 39.

<sup>79</sup> Memo. by Durand, 21 May 1887, PSM/C, 104.

<sup>80</sup> Chesney's Memo. dated 5 July 1887, Cross Papers/23, encl. 2 in No. 58.

<sup>81</sup> Roberts' note dated 13 June 1887, Roberts Papers/96/1, pp. 181-89.

Agency was of course not immediately considered, but Cross seriously urged Dufferin to consider the desirability of establishing "closer relations with the tribes on the frontier from Chitral to Baluchistan with a view to bringing them under control and utilising them for defence in the event of any hostile attack from that side."<sup>82</sup> The Viceroy certainly was aware of the importance of the tribal problem ; he agreed with the Secretary of State for India that the relations with these independent tribes ought to be placed on a more satisfactory footing.<sup>83</sup> The Punjab Government was accordingly informed,<sup>84</sup> and thus a decided step was taken in the direction of Lytton's objectives.

It was not long before events upon the northern frontier forced the Government of India to a much more decided course of action. Abdur Rahman indeed proved to be a very hard nut to crack. Despite his promises, and despite sharp reminders from the Government of India, he freely indulged in intrigues with the tribal chiefs on the Kashmir frontier. He was very persistent in his claims upon Swat and Bajaur ; he even tried to conclude a matrimonial alliance with the Mehtar of Chitral. Aman of course straightway refused, but only incurred his displeasure.<sup>85</sup> As a measure of retribution the Amir closed the Badakshan passes against travellers through and from Chitral, with the result that the Mehtar suffered a loss of about 12,000 rupees a year on account of transit duties.<sup>86</sup> This was followed by the imposition of a heavy tax on timber floated down the Kunar river from Chitral towards Peshawar.<sup>87</sup> Aman withstood all this, but became very apprehensive when the Amir was reported to have undertaken the construction of a road in the direction of Asmar and Kafiristan.<sup>88</sup> In fact, the tribal chiefships on the Kashmir frontier were all very nervous on account of the Amir's movements, and sought the protection of the Indian Government

<sup>82</sup> SS to GI, 21 July 1887, PSDI/13, pp. 55-59.

<sup>83</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 18 August 1887, Cross Papers/23, No. 55; Black, C.E.D. *The Marquess of Dufferin* (London 1903), p. 241.

<sup>84</sup> Davies, C.C. *The Problem of the North-West Frontier* (Cambridge 1932), p. 71.

<sup>85</sup> PCDs and MINWFs of Sept.-Dec. 1887, PSLEI/51; PCD, 21 Jan. 1888, PSLEI/52, pp. 469-76.

<sup>86</sup> PCD, 6 Oct. 1887, PSLEI/51, pp. 801-10.

<sup>87</sup> MINWF, April 1888, PSLEI/53, pp. 541-55.

<sup>88</sup> PCD, 14 May 1888, *ibid.*, pp. 923-28.

against him.<sup>89</sup> Finally, when Abdur Rahman moved to Jalalabad early in 1888, and was reported to be meditating an attack upon Bajaur, even the Punjab Government could not ignore it ; they urged the Government of India to take the matter up with the Amir.<sup>90</sup>

Dufferin was still prepared to overlook Afghan intrigues, but the rapid extension of Russia's power in Central Asia and her bellicose tendencies urged him to action. With the settlement of the Afghan boundary question in July 1887, Russia had begun to strengthen further her position in Central Asia.<sup>91</sup> A War Office memorandum bore evidence of great Russian activities in the direction of Badakshan.<sup>92</sup> Reports were received of concentration of Russian troops at different places between Garmab on the Persian border and the River Oxus. The Central Asian Railway of the Czar was making spectacular progress in the direction of Samarkand and Bokhara, and new roads were being pushed on to connect the different Russian stations in Central Asia.<sup>93</sup> War of course was not feared in 1887—neither in India nor at Whitehall<sup>94</sup>—and in 1888 the Russian Minister at Tehran even suggested to the British Ambassador an agreement between Britain, Germany and Russia guaranteeing India in return for British help in settling the Bulgarian difficulties of Russia.<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, the rapid military preparations of the Czar were a disquieting element that could not be long overlooked. Kimberley had time and again drawn the attention of the Indian Government to this aspect of Russian proceedings in Central Asia. Lord Dufferin, who was fast becoming a

<sup>89</sup> PCD, 29 July 1887, PSLEI/50, pp. 1875-79; PCD, 21 January 1888, PSLEI/ 52, pp. 469-76.

<sup>90</sup> IFP/3273, March 1888, Cons. 44, p. 41.

<sup>91</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 19 May 1887, Dufferin Papers/Reel 518, pp. 101-06.

<sup>92</sup> Dated August 22, 1887, PSHC/96, p. 1339.

<sup>93</sup> PCD, 14 Sept. 1887, PSLEI/51, pp. 543-49 ; MINWF, Feb. 1888, PSLEI/52, pp. 763-72; Dobson, G. *op. cit.*, pp. 413-14; Curzon, G.N. *Russia in Central Asia* (London 1889), pp. 44-45.

<sup>94</sup> Dufferin to Cross, 3 June 1887, Cross Papers/22, No. 44 ; Memo. by Brackenbury, War Office, 7 Aug. 1887, PSHC/96, pp. 1479-1525; Lansdell, H. *op. cit.*, pp. 640-41.

<sup>95</sup> Minister, Tehran, to Viceroy, 6 June 1888, Dufferin Papers/Reel 533, p. 18. For Russia's Bulgarian difficulties, Taylor, A. J. P. *op. cit.*, Chap. XIV. For the suggested Anglo-Russian agreement, Langer, W. *European Alliances and Alignments* (New York 1950), pp. 468-69.

convert to the Forward Policy, began certainly to feel the need for a more active policy on the Kashmir frontier when Russian activities spread beyond the Hindu Kush and seemed to threaten the security of the Indian Empire.

Already in 1887 some Russian travellers were reported to have visited Hunza. In the train of this new Russian advance came Captain Gromchevsky whose mission was evidently to explore the possibilities of Russian penetration across the Hindu Kush. There was a certain gap between the eastern boundary of Afghanistan at Wakhan and the western-most tip of the Chinese Empire at Aktash, through which small Russian forces could easily penetrate further south, and disturb the peace of the Hindu Kush regions. In fact, this tract was considered by Russia as a sort of 'no-man's land' so that Gromchevsky's visit to Hunza in the summer of 1888 and his movements along the Pamirs drove the point home that an adequate defensive measure for the protection of the northern frontier was a necessity that admitted of no indefinite postponement.<sup>96</sup>

It was indeed the question of Kashmiri control over the chieftains of Hunza and Nagar that immediately led to the re-establishment of the British Agency at Gilgit. These two Dard states, lying on the Kashmir frontier, were strategically very important commanding, as they did, the various passes of the Hindu Kush. They were only second to Chitral in their influence on the question of defence of the northern frontier, and were much less subservient to the Kashmir Maharaja than Aman-ul-Mulk.<sup>97</sup> Of these two states Hunza, though smaller

<sup>96</sup> GI to SS, 6 May 1889, and encl. (Durand's Report on Northern Frontiers, 5 May 1888) Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), pp. 547-610. For Gromchevsky's visit to the Pamirs and Hunza, as reported by Captain Younghusband, PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 210-15; also Younghusband to Nisbet, 30 Dec. 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11. Gromchevsky is said to have told Safdar Ali, the Mir of Hunza, that the Czar intended establishing a military post at Baltit with three hundred rifles, two guns, and a Russian officer to train the people of Hunza in the latest development of warfare. Mons. B. *High Road to Hunza* (London 1958), p. 94.

<sup>97</sup> Durand's Report on the northern frontiers of Kashmir, 5 May 1888, encl. in GI to SS, 6 May 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), pp. 547-610; Eckenstein, O. *The Karakoram and Kashmir* (London 1896), p. 119; for a description of Hunza and Nagar and their strategic importance, Durand, A.G. *op. cit.*, pp. 138-40.



in population than Nagar, was of greater importance on account of its geographical position. From it Chinese Turkistan could be reached without much difficulty ; immediately to its north, across the Kilik Pass, lay the gap between Afghanistan and China, through which Russian forces could march to Hunza, and *via* Gilgit, to Kashmir. Safdar Ali, the ruler of Hunza, who had murdered his father, Ghazan Khan, in 1886 and had succeeded him, was fully aware of the strategic importance of his state. Though on his accession to the throne he had rendered allegiance to the Kashmir Maharaja, Safdar Ali acknowledged at the same time the suzerainty of the Chinese, as his father had done before him. Of course, the recognition of Chinese suzerainty by the Chief of Hunza hardly ever exceeded a nominal tribute of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ounces of gold dust in return for two pieces of satin;<sup>98</sup> but in 1886 Ney Elias found in Yarkand that the Chinese regarded Hunza as a border district of Sinkiang and even talked of ultimately incorporating it within their province.<sup>99</sup> The same year Ghazan Khan told Lockhart that he considered himself a subject of the Chinese Emperor.<sup>100</sup> Yet, as long as the rulers of Hunza did not press this attitude to unpleasant extremes, the Government of India did not take much notice of their dual allegiance to Kashmir and China.

Matters, however, took a serious turn early in 1888. On 20 January, the Rajas of Hunza and Nagar with a force of 2000 men ejected the Kashmir troops from their posts at Chaprot and Chalt and threatened Nomal, a fort about 15 miles by road from Gilgit. The Kashmir outpost of Chaprot was situated on the Hunza river, 28 miles by road to the north of Gilgit, and had been occupied by the Maharaja's troops since 1876. Strategically, it was very important for the defence of Kashmir. It covered Gilgit from the north and checked Hunza and Nagar which lay about 20 miles away to the north-east. This fort had long been a source of discord between the Hunza and Nagar chiefs ; it was at the request of the latter that the Maharaja of Kashmir had

<sup>98</sup> The announcement of this tribute by Hunza was from time to time published in the Peking Gazette. Encl. 3 in GI to SS, 15 Oct. 1888, PSLEI/55, pp. 673-75.

<sup>99</sup> *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>100</sup> Lockhart and Woodthorpe, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

taken it over and since maintained it.<sup>101</sup> The causes of this sudden outbreak were not very clear at the time. As Plowden, the Kashmir Resident, subsequently gathered, the disturbances were brought about by the proceedings of Bakshi Mulraj, the Governor of Gilgit, who was charged with several acts of annoyance towards the Nagar people, and with having kept a portion of the subsidy paid by the Kashmir Darbar to Hunza. Both states had thus a common grudge against the Governor of Gilgit ; to discredit him they combined to attack the frontier outposts.<sup>102</sup>

Reinforcements were immediately sent from Gilgit to meet the besiegers at Nomal and met with initial success. The tribesmen fell back upon Chaprot and put up a determined show of retaining it. For the recovery of the frontier posts, a special Commission, backed by sufficient troops, was sent from Srinagar with instructions to obtain possession of Chalt and Chaprot by peaceable means, if possible ; by force, if necessary. The difficulty of the situation was that in the event of a large force being required for a considerable period of time to retake the posts, it was likely to suffer from want of supplies, whereas a small force was sure to be repulsed by the tribesmen. Negotiations were therefore preferred to violent means, notwithstanding that the entire proceedings of the Kashmir Darbar merely showed the unsatisfactory state of affairs at Gilgit. Eventually of course Chalt and Chaprot were re-occupied by Kashmir troops, but Plowden suspected that "this result has been brought about by bribery, and there is no guarantee ... that similar disturbances will not recur on the first opportunity."<sup>103</sup>

Meanwhile, the Chinese Government had preferred a complaint to Walsham, the British Ambassador at Peking, against an alleged attack by a British-Indian tribe upon Kanjut (Hunza) with a view to seizing the district of Chaprot. Evidently, the Peking Government was misinformed of the recent invasion

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<sup>101</sup> GI to SS, 30 June 1888, PSLEI/54, pp. 289-90.

<sup>102</sup> Plowden to India, 12 Sept. 1888 and 21 Sept. 1888, encls. 7 and 8 in GI to SS, 15 Oct. 1888, PSLEI/55, pp. 677-78.

<sup>103</sup> GI to SS, 15 Oct. 1888, and enclosures, *ibid.*, pp. 667-79.

by Hunza and Nagar upon Kashmir territories, but what really bothered Dufferin was the Chinese claim to suzerainty over Hunza which was made by the Tsungli Yamen in no uncertain terms. The Viceroy was not disposed to recognise the Chinese or any other rights in Hunza :

"It is imperative that in this quarter we should keep the Chinese and every other power to the north of the barrier formed by the Himalayas and Hindu Kush, and though it may be inexpedient at this moment to enter into any discussion with the Chinese Government upon the question, we must in practice maintain our right to deal with Hunza direct..."<sup>104</sup>

Both Cross<sup>105</sup> and Salisbury,<sup>106</sup> the British Foreign Secretary, approved of the view of the situation taken by the Government of India. Walsham was asked to explain the situation created by the Hunza attack upon Chaprot, emphasising that the ruler of Hunza had long been a feudatory of the Kashmir Maharaja, receiving a yearly pension and paying tribute. He was of course directed not to enter into any elaborate discussion with the Yamen upon the question ; accordingly Walsham simply asserted in a personal interview that it "would be impossible...for the Indian Government to allow the petty border chieftain to create disturbances on Indian soil with impunity, and in reliance on his pretension to be a tributary state of the Chinese Empire."<sup>107</sup>

Dufferin, however, did not rest contented merely with the assertion of the Maharaja's rights over Hunza. While the negotiations were being actively carried on by the Kashmir representatives with Hunza and Nagar during the summer months of 1886, he decided to depute an officer to the Gilgit frontier

<sup>104</sup> GI to SS, 30 June 1888, PSLEI/54, pp. 289-90.

<sup>105</sup> IO to FO, 25 Aug. 1888, PSHC/103, pp. 1485-87.

<sup>106</sup> FO to IO, 10 Sept. 1888, PSHC/104, pp. 375-78, encls. 1 and 2 to the IO letter of 21 Sept. 1888, PSDI/14, pp. 55-56.

<sup>107</sup> Walsham to Yamen, 21 June 1888, encl. 3 in GI to SS, 15 October 1888, PSLEI/55, pp. 674-75.

to ascertain the military position there. Captain Algernon Durand of the Quarter-Master-General's Department was selected for that purpose and was required to examine the situation at Gilgit with reference to the recent tribal disturbances and to future possible complications with Russia. He was asked to work out a scheme for rendering Gilgit secure without the aid of British troops, and for dominating from Gilgit through Kashmir forces the country up to the Hindu Kush. On his return Durand complained that the military position at Gilgit was as unsatisfactory as it was possible to imagine. He especially drew the attention of the Government of India to Gromchevsky's visit to Hunza in the autumn of 1888, and to that gap between the Afghan and the Chinese frontiers, often called "Gromchevsky's wedge",<sup>108</sup> through which Russia could push down to Hunza at any time and make her influence felt along the Kashmir frontier. As a remedy, he recommended a scheme of defence based upon a British Agency at Gilgit and a direct road to Chitral from the Peshawar frontier through Dir.<sup>109</sup>

Meanwhile, the state of affairs in Kashmir had considerably changed, providing for the adoption of a comprehensive scheme of frontier defence. The plan for the reorganisation of the Native States' armies had been approved by Dufferin; the Maharaja had agreed to raise and equip a force of 2500 men for India's defence. Dufferin of course did not stay in India to give effect either to his scheme of imperial defence or to Durand's recommendations for a Gilgit Agency. He left them for his successor to carry out, and by the time Lord Lansdowne could give his serious attention to Durand's proposals, further changes had taken place in Kashmir. The Maharaja's supersession in April 1889 had brought the administration of the state "under proper control" of the Indian Government,

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<sup>108</sup> When Younghusband met Captain Gromchevsky on the Pamirs, the latter showed him a map on which there was a broad red line enclosing a strip of country running down from the Russian frontier and including the eastern portion of Wakhan and the Taghdumbash Pamir. Younghusband to Nisbet, 24 Oct. 1889, PSDOC/3, First Series, pp. 205-08.

<sup>109</sup> Durand's Report, 5 Dec. 1888, encl. in GI to SS, 6 May 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), pp. 547-610.

while the training of the State army had been set well on foot. So, Lansdowne hoped that

“an English agent in Gilgit would not now have serious reason to complain of obstructiveness on the part of the Darbar officials, or of inefficient arrangements for his protection.”<sup>110</sup>

The new Viceroy agreed with his predecessor that no foreign power should be allowed to establish its influence in the region to the north of Kashmir. The attempt of the Russians to penetrate to the south of the Hindu Kush and of the Afghans and the Chinese “to tamper with some of the small chiefships in this quarter” convinced him of the necessity of establishing closer relations with these tribal chieftains. Lansdowne fully agreed with Algernon Durand that the way to do that was to establish a British Agency at Gilgit consisting of four officers and a brigade of Kashmir troops. He accepted with modifications Durand’s proposal for subsidising the rulers of these small states in return for their allegiance to the Indian Government ; he approved of his suggestion for the road from Peshawar to Chitral. And, in anticipation of Cross’s approval he sent Captain Durand back to Kashmir to await there the final instructions of the Government of India.<sup>111</sup>

While the proposals of Lansdowne’s Government were under the consideration of the Secretary of State for India, the Kashmir Darbar expressed a wish to bear the entire cost of the re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency. But the Viceroy was unwilling to allow the Darbar to bear the whole cost, and decided that the expenditure on account of the British Agent and his office establishment, the increased subsidies to the chiefs of Chitral, Hunza, Nagar and Panyal, and some other items should be borne by the Government of India. The Kashmir Darbar accepted the arrangement, and when the approval of the Secretary of State was obtained, Captain Durand who was already in Kashmir was directed to proceed to Gilgit to work out his defence scheme.

<sup>110</sup> GI to SS, 6 May 1889, *ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

Durand was asked to pay a visit to Hunza and Nagar to counteract the Chinese and Russian attempts to establish an influence in those parts. He was asked to explain to the chiefs of those states the wishes of the Government of India and to offer them increased subsidies of 2000 rupees each per annum, contingent upon the cessation of their raiding of the neighbouring regions and the grant of free access to their countries by British officers. On the conclusion of his visit to Hunza and Nagar, Durand was to visit Chitral and set on foot the new arrangements there.<sup>112</sup>

Captain Durand reached Gilgit on 27 July 1889, accompanied by Lieutenant Manners-Smith and Surgeon-Major G.S. Robertson, both officers of the Agency. He was well received by the local officials, and was soon able to start for Nagar. Raja Jafar Khan was very cordial with the British Agent and readily accepted the stipulations laid down by the Government of India in return for the increased subsidy. At Hunza, however, Durand met with some difficulties. Safdar Ali of course accepted the stipulations of the Government of India in return for his subsidy ; but he maintained that owing to his having a jagir in Yarkand, he would still have to communicate with China. Further, when he ascertained that he would be treated on equal terms with his neighbour, the Chief of Nagar, whom he considered to be a ruler of less importance, the Hunza Chief changed his attitude and demanded an allowance of 500 rupees per annum for his son. For a time, even the security of the British mission seemed threatened. Durand's tact however saved the situation, and at his recommendation the Government of India eventually agreed to pay an allowance of 500 rupees to Safdar Ali's son, subject of course to the good behaviour of that chief.

From Hunza the British Agent and his party made a successful visit to Chitral. Aman-ul-Mulk readily agreed to the conditions of the Government of India contingent upon the receipt of his increased subsidy. He promised all help in opening

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<sup>112</sup> Encl. 6 in GI to SS, 3 Dec. 1889, *ibid.*, pp. 1169-70 ; Durand, A.G. *op. cit.*, p. 121.

up the Peshawar-Chitral road, the improvements of the main paths in his country to tracks passable by laden mules, and the fortification of certain selected positions to be afterwards pointed out to him. As against all that, he was granted a subsidy of 6000 rupees per annum and a gift of rifles.<sup>113</sup>

Durand thus carried out the instructions of the Government of India with complete success. On his own initiative he took yet another measure to accomplish his immediate object. To mark the establishment of the British Agency, he invited the neighbouring chiefs to Gilgit, all of whom either came in person or sent suitable representatives. A Durbar was held, at which the permanent re-establishment of the Agency was formally announced, and the chiefs were informed that their subsidies would in future be regularly paid every year. They were warned at the same time that the payment of subsidies would be contingent upon the faithful execution by them of the agreements they had undertaken to fulfil.<sup>114</sup> Durand's work was highly commented upon by the Secretary of State for India, and Cross hoped that this "will secure the exclusion of any foreign influence in these territories adverse to Imperial interests."<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Encls. 6, 9 and 10 in GI to SS, 3 Dec. 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), pp. 1169-80; Gilgit Agency Report, 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(ii), pp. 302-09.

<sup>114</sup> MINWF, Jan. 1890, PSLEI/59, pp. 437-38; Durand, A.G. *op. cit.*, p. 227.

<sup>115</sup> SS to GI, 10 Jan. 1890, Lansdowne Papers/IB(ix), p. 81; PSDI/16 pp. 5-7.

## CONSOLIDATION OF BRITISH INFLUENCE ALONG THE KASHMIR FRONTIERS

1889-93

The re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency was not an end in itself ; it was a means to an end. Admittedly, the objects of the Agency were to watch and control the country lying to the south of the Hindu Kush, and to prevent any *coup de main* by a small body of troops descending by the Baroghil or the Hunza group of passes. Lansdowne acknowledged that it would not be possible to operate from Gilgit to repel an advance from the direction of Badakshan by the Dora route upon the western frontier of Chitral. That was why both he and Durand suggested the construction of a road from Peshawar through Dir to Chitral, so that a force could be moved up the Peshawar Valley in the event of any Russian attack upon the Mehtar's territories.<sup>1</sup>

Evidently, the policy thus laid down postulated a certain control over the southern ends of the above passes, and inevitably, upon the entire tribal region to the south of the Hindu Kush. This was all the more necessary in view of the vulnerability of the mountain ranges to the north of Kashmir. Neither the so-called "no-man's land" that separated the Afghan frontiers from the Chinese, nor the Baroghil and the Hunza passes were the only vulnerable points through which a small Russian army could swoop down upon the southern slopes of the mountain barrier of the north. Captain Francis Younghusband, who had been sent on deputation to the northern frontiers of Kashmir in the summer of 1889, discovered a few more practicable routes leading directly into the valley of the Hunza river. He pointed out that it was not difficult for a small Russian force, driving with them flocks of sheep to subsist on, to invade the territories of Hunza through these passes.<sup>2</sup> In his report on the progress of the

<sup>1</sup> GI to SS, 6 May 1889, and enclosure, Lansdowne Papers/IB(i), pp. 547-610.

<sup>2</sup> Younghusband to Nisbet, 30 Dec. 1889, Ardagh Papers/Box 11.



Gilgit Agency of 1889, Lieutenant Colonel Durand also drew the attention of the Government of India to the possibility of a Russian force penetrating southward through these outlets. Both he and Younghusband agreed that in order to forestall such an attack the Government of India should assume the practical sovereignty of the entire tribal region upto the Hindu Kush. But that would not be possible so long as the absolute loyalty of the ruler of Hunza could not be assured. And that chief was so thoroughly possessed by a false notion of his own importance that it would be impossible to bring him under control unless he could be taught that the armed strength of the British Government was far greater than the subsidies he was receiving from them.<sup>3</sup> In thus advocating the establishment of British supremacy along the Kashmir frontiers both Durand and Younghusband merely echoed the sentiments of Sir Frederick Roberts ; since 1885 Roberts had been pleading "that the Hindu Kush must eventually be our frontier."<sup>4</sup> Lansdowne's opinion was in complete accord with Roberts' : he believed with his Commander-in-Chief that the tribes along the Indian frontiers should be assimilated "as rapidly as possible" and must never be allowed to "pass on to the wrong side of the account."<sup>5</sup> It was indeed a conviction with the Viceroy that the mountain barrier to the north of Kashmir should be "the limit of our political jurisdiction."<sup>6</sup>

In fact, Durand had set himself to this task immediately after his arrival at Gilgit. Measures were taken to strengthen the forts at Gilgit and improve the transport system between that place and Srinagar in order that supplies for the troops might be easily obtained.<sup>7</sup> The Gilgit-Srinagar road was gradually pushed up, and the question of improving the local communications was exhaustively examined.<sup>8</sup> Although Durand did not

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*; Gilgit Agency Report, 1889, by Algernon Durand, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 28 April 1890, Lansdowne Papers/IB(ii), pp. 302-09.

<sup>4</sup> Roberts to Lansdowne, 12 July 1890, Lansdowne Papers/VII(d), pp. 38-39.

<sup>5</sup> Lansdowne to Roberts, 17 Feb. 1889, Lansdowne Papers/VII(a), p. 82.

<sup>6</sup> GI to SS, 14 July 1890, Lansdowne Papers/IB(ii), pp. 557-60.

<sup>7</sup> IFP/3962, Jan. 1891, Cons. 157-62, p. 183; Durand, A.G. *The Making of a Frontier*, p. 227.

<sup>8</sup> IFP/4182, Feb. 1892, Cons. 33, pp. 16-18.

seem to have been very happy with what was done in the first year of the Agency, by October 1889 the Government of India congratulated itself on the "very favourable results" that were claimed to have "attended the active policy" at Gilgit. A year later, Lansdowne wrote to the Home Government :

"...since the re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency, much has been done to strengthen British influence and control among the petty states lying between Kashmir and the Hindu Kush."<sup>9</sup>

In reality, however, the situation along the Kashmir frontier was not that rosy. Early in 1890, news was received from the Gilgit Agent pointing to "the existence of a feeling of uneasiness amongst the neighbouring tribes." The establishment of the Agency was looked upon as the first step towards the annexation of the entire tribal region. Rumours of an intention to build a road to Chalt and strengthen its fort gradually got about, and it was whispered that Hunza and Nagar had entered into a defensive alliance with a determination to resist all attempts to construct the road to Chalt or strengthen the fortress there.<sup>10</sup>

For Durand the hostile attitude of the ruler of Hunza which persisted throughout 1890 was not anything new. He had come back from his first visit to Hunza fully convinced that Safdar Ali was too vain and arrogant to be controlled by the mere payment of an annual subsidy, and that the only way to keep him straight was to impress upon him the superior strength of the British arms.<sup>11</sup> What actually perturbed Durand was the absence of peace along the Kashmir frontiers. The political situation there was disturbed by conflicting alliances among the states within the circle of the British Agent's supervision.<sup>12</sup> The

<sup>9</sup> GI to SS, 7 Oct. 1890, and encl. 1 in it, PSLEI/61, pp. 455-58.

<sup>10</sup> MINWF, March 1890, PSLEI/59, p. 1063; MINWF, April 1890, PSLEI/60, p. 15.

<sup>11</sup> Gilgit Agency Report, 1889, Lansdowne Papers/IB(ii), pp. 302-09.

<sup>12</sup> The states within the Gilgit Agent's circle of supervision were : Chitral and Yasin, Hunza and Nagar to the north ; the petty state of Punyal, adjoining Gilgit on the west ; and the republican states of Gor, Chilas, Darel and Tangir, all on the Indus. For the conflicts among the states, MINWF, November 1890, PSLEI/61, pp. 948-49.

rising Chief of Jandol, Umra Khan, was constantly at war with his neighbouring chiefships. The Mehtar of Chitral was at loggerheads with him, and encouraged the Bajauri chiefs to oppose Umra's aggressive activities. He even wished the British Government to interfere with the Jandol Chief to put a restraint upon his bellicose tendencies.<sup>13</sup>

Confusion was worse confounded by the interference of the Amir of Afghanistan in the politics of the northern frontiers. As already mentioned, Abdur Rahman had never given up his pretensions to suzerainty over Bajaur, and though warned from time to time, he had carried on his intrigues with impunity and laboured most persistently to bring the chiefs of Bajaur under his influence. But Lansdowne's Government wished to see Umra Khan as the champion of Bajauri independence against the Amir's pretensions.<sup>14</sup> In fact, to facilitate the construction of the Peshawar-Chitral road, the Government of India had been considering a defensive alliance with the Jandol Chief since 1889. Umra's excessive demands, coupled with Lansdowne's reluctance to take an active part in Bajauri politics, led however to the failure of the negotiations. Actually, Lansdowne was not willing to do anything that could alienate the Amir irretrievably. He was aware that the active tribal policy of his government had annoyed the Amir, and undoubtedly, as he said, "any signs of marked activity in the direction of Swat and Bajaur would greatly irritate him."<sup>15</sup>

So long, indeed, as the balance of power upon the northern frontiers was preserved by the triangular conflict between Chitral, Jandol and the Amir of Afghanistan, the Government of India had very little to worry about in this connection. Durand therefore took to pacific measures to strengthen his position at Gilgit. He sent his agents to the frontier states to assure them that the British Government had no intention to interfere in their domestic affairs so long as they remained true to their

<sup>13</sup> MINWF, Feb. 1890, PSLEI/59, p. 829; PCD, 15 Jan. 1890, *ibid.*, p. 154; PCD, 10 Nov. 1890, PSLEI/61, pp. 848-50.

<sup>14</sup> GI to SS, 16 Aug. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), pp. 283-306.

<sup>15</sup> Lansdowne to Roberts, 18 Dec. 1890, Roberts Papers/Box File Li, R34/126.

engagements. This was reiterated when the representatives of the subsidised states came in December 1890 to receive their annual payments.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, Durand had made arrangements for regular supplies for the Gilgit troops ; a road between Gilgit and Nomal was taken in hand ; and the Kashmiri "rabble in the Gilgit command" were relieved by the First Kashmir Infantry, trained for Imperial Service.<sup>17</sup> By October 1890, 40 miles of the Srinagar-Gilgit road was constructed. About the same time the survey for a bridge over the Indus at Bunji was completed, and before long, Durand called attention to the immediate necessity of completing the road to Chalt and strengthening the fortress there. All this, he said, was necessary to keep the Gilgit Agency in a state of preparedness for any offensive against Hunza and Nagar whose hostile intentions continued to be a source of anxiety to the British Agent.<sup>18</sup>

While Durand was thus busy strengthening the Gilgit Agency, Lord Lansdowne suggested that China should be encouraged to occupy that strip of "no-man's land" to the north of Hunza which lay between her frontiers and the Afghan. He attached "the greatest importance to filling up this vacant space" because Russian encroachment at this point would be "extremely inconvenient" to the Indian Government. Lansdowne's idea was to build up a solid wall of Afghan, British and Chinese territory that would act as a barrier against a Russian advance.<sup>19</sup> The idea of course was not his own. After the conclusion of the Russo-Afghan boundary agreement of July 1887, the Amir had approached the Government of India for a demarcation of his frontiers upto the Pamirs.<sup>20</sup> At the time, however, there were practical difficulties for laying down a well defined frontier in this direction. By the Agreement of 1873 between England and Russia which had tentatively defined the northern frontier

<sup>16</sup> MINWF, Feb. 1891, PSLEI/62, p. 765; Neve, A. *Thirty Years in Kashmir* (London 1913), p. 157.

<sup>17</sup> Durand, A.G. *op. cit.*, pp. 230-34; MINWF, Nov. 1890, PSLEI/61, pp. 948-49; Sykes, P. *Sir Mortimer Durand* (London 1926), p. 183.

<sup>18</sup> Durand to Kashmir Resident, 2 March 1891, IFP/3962, July 1891, Cons. 37, pp. 28-30; MINWF, Feb. 1891, PSLEI/62, p. 765; Sykes, P. *op. cit.*, p. 184.

<sup>19</sup> GI to SS, 14 July 1890, Lansdowne Papers/IB(ii), pp. 557-60.

<sup>20</sup> Amir to Dy. Commissioner, Peshawar, 5 Aug. 1887, PSLEI/51, p. 351.

of Afghanistan, the Amir's territories to the north-east terminated at Victoria or Wood's Lake.<sup>21</sup> From that point to the Chinese frontier at Aktash there was a stretch of undefined territory—a sort of “no-man's land”—which, Dufferin feared, would no doubt be claimed by Russia if any proposal should be made by the British Government for the demarcation of Afghan territories in the direction of the Pamirs. He was therefore eager to encourage Afghan occupation of this undefined territory, so that at the time of actual demarcation the Amir's rights could be established on the basis of possession.<sup>22</sup> But both Cross and Salisbury, the Foreign Secretary, were opposed to such an idea for fear of fresh complications with Russia ; the proposal was consequently dropped.<sup>23</sup> When Lansdowne revived it in 1890 the idea of an Anglo-Chinese alliance as a bulwark against Russia had gained official recognition. So, there would not have been any difficulty perhaps to give effect to Lansdowne's proposal if it were known how far the Chinese claims upon the Pamirs actually extended. The British Foreign Office considered any discussion on the subject “useless and dangerous” unless a definite line of frontier could be determined beforehand as a basis of discussion with China.<sup>24</sup> As a necessary preliminary to the Indian proposal, therefore, Younghusband was sent to make a survey of the northern frontiers with a view to determining the actual extent of Chinese influence and to encourage them to occupy the territories claimed by them.<sup>25</sup>

At Gilgit Durand was so anxious to complete the road to Nomal that he even urged the Government of India to bear its expenses, if the Kashmir Darbar should find it difficult to provide funds. In his opinion, the road was necessary not only to keep Hunza in check, but also for any offensive action against a Russian force advancing towards Gilgit.<sup>26</sup> Events soon justified

<sup>21</sup> Ghose, D. K. *op. cit.*, pp. 167-68.

<sup>22</sup> GI to SS, 27 Dec. 1887, PSLEI/51, pp. 1377-79.

<sup>23</sup> SS to GI, 2 March 1888, PSDI/14, pp. 5-6.

<sup>24</sup> Note by T.H. Sanderson, 10 Sept. 1890, FO 65/1394.

<sup>25</sup> GI to SS, 14 July 1890, and encl. 1, Lansdowne Papers/IB(ii), pp. 557-61. Younghusband, F.E. *The Heart of a Continent* (London 1896), p. 291.

<sup>26</sup> Durand to Kashmir Resident, 2 March 1891, IFP/3962, July 1891, Cons. 37, pp. 28-30.

his apprehensions. On 25 May 1891, Durand received the news that Uzz Khan, son of the Raja of Nagar, had murdered his brothers Gauri Tham Khan and Ding Malik, and was planning to seize the Kashmir posts at Chalt and Chaprot. Two days later, when he heard that a Nagar official was on his way to occupy Chalt and Chaprot, Durand made a rapid march to Chalt with a small Kashmiri force and occupied it. Finding their position untenable the Nagar forces dispersed without firing a shot. Soon, however, letters were received from Safdar Ali of Hunza announcing that he had always been subject to China, and if attacked by Durand he would fight till Chinese help arrived. This intention was of course disavowed shortly afterwards; both Hunza and Nagar promised not to make any attack on Chalt or Chaprot. But Durand refused to trust these assurances. After making arrangements for holding the frontier outposts with a sufficient garrison of Kashmir troops, he returned to Gilgit.<sup>27</sup>

Even so, Durand was convinced that all that had been won was only a breathing space. He had no illusion about the promises made by the Rajas of Hunza and Nagar, and soon reported that it was believed on all sides that an attack on Chalt would be attempted during the winter.<sup>28</sup> He therefore applied to India for more British officers for the Agency, and three lieutenants were soon sent up to Gilgit. At the same time the Kashmir Resident was urged by the Government of India to "press de Bourbel about the Indus bridge and more important parts of the Gilgit road",<sup>29</sup> so that there might not be any difficulties of communication between Gilgit and Srinagar in time of a crisis. Besides, the probability of disturbances breaking out again, and the obvious need for coming to a definite conclusion in regard to the manner in which the Hunza and Nagar states should be treated in future, led the Government

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<sup>27</sup> IFP/4182, Jan. 1892, Cons. 127, pp. 42-48. Kashmir Resident to India, 1 June 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VII(e), pp. 462-63; Durand, A.G. *op. cit.*, pp. 227-43; Knight, E.F. *Where Three Empires Meet*, (London 1893), p. 335.

<sup>28</sup> GI to SS, 25 Oct. 1891, PSLEI/64, pp. 899-900.

<sup>29</sup> India to Resident, 27 June 1891, IFP/3962, Dec. 1891, Cons. 33, p. 48.

of India to summon Durand to Simla to discuss the situation upon the northern frontier.<sup>30</sup>

Durand recommended that the first thing to be done to preserve British influence along the northern frontiers was to bring Hunza and Nagar under complete control. To do so, it was necessary in his opinion to build a proper fort at Chalt, and to improve the road to that place from Gilgit. These measures, though certain to evoke protests from the chiefs of these two states, must be carried out. The chiefs should be plainly told that, while the Government of India had no intention to interfere in their internal affairs, they were determined to exercise a complete control over them, to reserve to themselves the right to make roads into their country, and to place officers there if that should appear desirable. At the least sign of opposition from these states, a force should be marched into their territories and all opposition broken down. Of the two rulers, Durand was inclined to treat the Nagar Chief leniently, though not his son, Uzr Khan, whom he wanted to remove into exile. In his opinion, Safdar Ali, the ruler of Hunza was more dangerous and faithless ; he demanded his immediate removal and substitution by a son of five or six years, backed by a Regency. To strengthen the Gilgit Agency, Durand recommended the increase of the Agency guard by 200 Gurkhas, more guns, a telegraph line from Srinagar to Gilgit, and fourteen more officers for the Agency staff. This was considered necessary to train the Kashmir troops of the Agency so that they might be able to hold their own against any Russian advance.<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, a new aspect had been added to the question of defence of the northern frontier by the arrival on the Pamirs of certain parties of Russians whose avowed object was to annex the Great, Little, and Alichur Pamirs.<sup>32</sup> Their activities, as Younghusband reported, were very brisk, and officers from the

<sup>30</sup> GI to SS, 6 January 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(v), pp. 37-45; Durand, A.G. *op. cit.*, p. 245.

<sup>31</sup> Durand's Memoranda, 4 and 14 Sept. 1891, encls. 6 and 7 in GI to SS, 25 Oct. 1891, PSLEI/64, pp. 921-24, 927-30.

<sup>32</sup> Encls. 11 and 15 in GI to SS, 8 Sept. 1891, PSLEI/63, pp. 1307-1372; India to British Ambassador, Peking, Lansdowne Papers/VII(f), p. 65.

Gilgit Agency were sent up to watch the Russian proceedings. Matters came to a head when on 13 August 1891 Younghusband was expelled from Bozai Gumbaz on the Little Pamirs by a Russian Colonel, Yanoff.<sup>33</sup> Whether Bozai Gumbaz was within Afghan territory, or in the debatable lands outside it, is another matter. It certainly was not in Russian possession, and the forcible expulsion of an accredited British officer was therefore considered by Lansdowne "a piece of great effrontery."<sup>34</sup> The authorities at the India Office were fully sympathetic to the Viceroy. Although it was apprehended

"that Younghusband's action would stir up the Russians to make some counter movement of their own",

it was never imagined that "it would take such an outrageously lawless form".<sup>35</sup>

Indeed, the Russian activities on the Pamirs created an awkward, if not dangerous, situation for the Indian Government. Especially their move to Bozai Gumbaz, if followed by annexation of that territory as Lansdowne apprehended, would bring the "Russians to the crest of the Hindoo Koosh passes".<sup>36</sup> The inconvenience of a Russian wedge, driven between Afghanistan and China, and touching the passes which lay to the north of Hunza and Nagar, was obvious. Lansdowne was afraid that these two states, restless and insubordinate of late, might be stirred to action by the recent Russian encroachment upon Bozai Gumbaz. With this view of the Viceroy's Cross fully agreed. "I mistrust the Russians everywhere," he said, "and we cannot for a moment allow Hunza or Nagar to be disturbed."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Tel. from Viceroy, 3 Sept. 1891, PSHC/124, pp. 539-41; Younghusband, F.E. *op. cit.*, pp. 330-32; Seaver, G. *Francis Younghusband*, (London 1952), pp. 143-45; Curzon, G.N. *The Pamirs and the Source of the Oxus* (London 1897), p. 40.

<sup>34</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 8 Sept. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IX(c), pp. 105-07; Indian Officer, *Russia's March towards India*, (London 1894), p. 261.

<sup>35</sup> IO Memo., PSHC/124, p. 537.

Tel. from Viceroy, 7 Sept. 1891, PSHC/125, p. 215.

Cross to Lansdowne, 10 Oct. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IX(c), pp. 70-72.



Immediate measures were therefore taken to check further Russian encroachment south of the Hindu Kush and to strengthen the Gilgit Agency. Manners-Smith, then acting for Durand at Gilgit, was asked not to allow the Russians to advance to Chitral or Hunza, nor to permit them to descend the Iskoman, Yasin or Chalt Valley. Hunza and Chitral were warned that no foreign armed parties were to be allowed to cross the passes into their territory.<sup>38</sup> To strengthen the Gilgit Agency, Durand's suggestion of an increase in the British Agent's guard by 200 Gurkhas was seriously considered. Roberts thought it was "most moderate"; before long Lansdowne, with Cross's approval, sent the required men to Gilgit along with two guns.<sup>39</sup> Lansdowne even hinted to Cross that it would be soon necessary to fortify Chalt to keep Hunza and Nagar under complete control. As an answer to the Russian move upon the Pamirs, Roberts even wanted to visit Gilgit. But Lansdowne did not like the idea lest it should give rise to misapprehension among the Russians. At any rate, he was unwilling to pay so great a compliment to Yanoff and his "bluffing announcement".<sup>40</sup> The Commander-in-Chief of India, he said, was "too high a card to trump the Russian Colonel with".<sup>41</sup> Even so, complaints against Russian movements on the Pamirs were lodged at St. Petersburg. Salisbury hoped that "proper reparation" would be offered by the Russian Government for the treatment to which Younghusband had been subjected.<sup>42</sup>

As a further check upon Russian encroachment, Walsham, the British Ambassador at Peking, was instructed to impress upon the Chinese Government the importance of effectively occupying all that she claimed on the Pamirs. Lest, however, it should encourage her to claim a right upon the territories of Hunza, it was made clear at the same time that Hunza was within

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<sup>38</sup> IO to FO, 31 August 1891, PSHC/124, pp. 73-74.

<sup>39</sup> GI to SS, 6 Jan. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(v), pp. 37-45; Knight, E.F. *op. cit.*, p. 336.

<sup>40</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 15 Sept. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IX(c), pp. 108-12.

<sup>41</sup> Lansdowne to Brackenbury (Military Member of the Viceroy's Council), 1 Sept. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VII(f), p. 69.

<sup>42</sup> PSHC/125, p. 217 ; Younghusband, F.E. *op. cit.*, p. 332.

the British sphere of influence.<sup>43</sup> A division of the disputed territory on the Pamirs between Afghanistan and China was even proposed by the British Foreign Office to the Chinese Legation in London.<sup>44</sup> The Tsungli Yamen at Peking seemed to have reacted favourably at first to British proposals. The Chinese Governor at Kashgar was instructed to tell the Russians that their encroachment upon the Pamirs would not be tolerated.<sup>45</sup> Chinese officers visited the Alichur, Taghdumbash and the Great Pamirs to watch the Russian proceedings. But with the lapse of time the early enthusiasm of the Yamen gradually cooled down, till by the middle of the next year it was bluntly declared that China had no wish to occupy any territory in the debatable land ; and as

“England had no intention of advancing beyond the Hindu Kush, the only alternative seemed to be occupation by Russia.”<sup>46</sup>

But a rallying ground for Russia on the slopes of the Hindu Kush or the Pamirs that would enable her to make a forward move south of the mountain ranges was exactly what the Government of India was determined to prevent. Accordingly, when Whitehall had begun to think in terms of a Pamir delimitation,<sup>47</sup> Lansdowne's Government proceeded to strengthen and control the states within the circle of the Gilgit Agency. In January 1891 the Mehtar of Chitral had applied to the Viceroy for an increase in his subsidy, so that he might be able to maintain a standing force of 2000 musketeers to be employed in guarding the passes leading into his country.<sup>48</sup> But neither Durand nor Prideaux supported the Mehtar's application. Both of them suggested instead that it would suffice to present Aman-ul-Mulk with one hundred snider carbines, and that four Muslim

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<sup>43</sup> FO to Sieh Tajen (Chinese Minister in London), 31 August 1891, PSHC/124, pp. 443-45.

<sup>44</sup> Sanderson to Halliday Macartney, 15 Aug. 1891, FO 65/1415.

<sup>45</sup> George Macartney (On special duty at Kashgar) to India, 1 Nov. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(v) p. 53.

<sup>46</sup> FO to Walsham, FO No. 73, 12 May 1892, FO 65/1437.

<sup>47</sup> Memo. by Edmund Neel, 10 Sept. 1891, PSHC/124, pp. 933-35.

<sup>48</sup> Aman to Viceroy, 3 Jan. 1891, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 14 Oct. 1891, PSLEI/64, pp. 243-45.

non-commissioned officers should be deputed to instruct the men already carrying sniders in the Mehtar's service. But the increasing activities of the Russians on the Pamirs led the Government of India to respond favourably to Aman's application. The suggestions for granting the Mehtar one hundred snider carbines and sending four Muslim officers to train his troops were of course approved. But in addition, the subsidy of the ruler of Chitral was raised from 6,000 to 12,000 rupees a year ; and an annual gift of 1,500 rupees was sanctioned for each of his sons, Afzal and Nizam, and another of 1,000 for the youngest son Shah-i-Mulk. These allowances were granted on condition that the Mehtar would be guided by British advice on all matters, and accept a permanent British Resident officer in his country.<sup>49</sup>

As regards Hunza and Nagar, Lansdowne fully agreed with Durand that it was necessary for the safety of the northern frontiers to bring these two states under complete control. Unless that was done, the ruler of Hunza might let a Russian force into his territories, within a few marches of Gilgit. In Lansdowne's opinion, the reasons that led Dufferin's Government to refuse to recognise Chinese rights in Hunza applied with double force in the case of Russia ; that power must be kept off by all means from the territories of Safdar Ali.<sup>50</sup> Both Cross and Salisbury approved of it whereupon the Viceroy instructed Durand to move troops to Chalt at the end of October 1891, ostensibly to improve the road between that place and Gilgit and to build a small fort at Chalt. At the same time, the Gilgit Agency was further strengthened by the increase of its staff,<sup>51</sup> while Durand was asked to address letters to the Rajas of Hunza and Nagar, clearly pointing out that for the safety of Kashmir and its dependencies the British Government should have free access to their territories whenever required. Moreover, the Government of India reserved to themselves the right to build military roads through their territories as far as necessary to secure the command of the Hindu Kush passes. Durand was

<sup>49</sup> India to Resident, 1 Oct. 1891, encl. 8 in *ibid.*, pp. 249-50.

<sup>50</sup> GI to SS, 25 Oct. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/IB(iv), pp. 985-86.

<sup>51</sup> IFP/3962, Dec. 1891, Cons. 53 and 55, pp. 52-53.

asked to inform the Rajas that if they should refuse to comply with these demands, troops from Gilgit would march into their countries, put down all opposition by force, and construct the roads in spite of the opposition offered.<sup>52</sup>

Owing to difficulties of supply, work upon the Chalt road could not be begun until after the middle of November, but by then Durand had come to know that Hunza and Nagar troops had assembled near Chalt and threatened its security.<sup>53</sup> Towards the end of November Durand reached Chalt and sent his ultimatum as proposed.<sup>54</sup> But he received a defiant and abusive reply from Safdar Ali whereupon an advance was made on 2 December. After some fighting Nilt was taken, but Durand himself was severely wounded. Pushing on rapidly the British forces occupied Nagar on 21 December, and Hunza the next day. The Raja of Nagar made full submission, but his son, Uzr Khan, and Safdar Ali of Hunza fled to the mountains. The defeat of the tribal chiefs was complete—thanks to the Kashmir State troops of the Imperial Service Corps, who for the first time since the inauguration of the Imperial defence scheme, showed themselves capable of fighting side by side with the Indian troops.<sup>55</sup> Pending the orders of the Government of India as to the disposal of the defeated states Lieutenant Townshend was appointed Military Governor of Hunza.<sup>56</sup>

As the news of the British occupation of Hunza reached the Chinese authorities they became anxious about the future arrangements there.<sup>57</sup> Even earlier, when they came to know of the intention of the Government of India to build a fort at Chalt, anxious enquiries were made by the Tsungli Yamen, and George Macartney, then on Special Duty at Kashgar, apprehended

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<sup>52</sup> GI to SS, 6 Jan. 1892, IFP/4182, Jan. 1892, Cons. 127, pp. 42-48. Sykes, *P. op. cit.*, p. 184; Knight, *E.F. op. cit.*, p. 336.

<sup>53</sup> Gilgit Diary, 21 Nov. 1891, IFP/4182, Jan. 1892, Cons. 29, p. 18.

<sup>54</sup> IFP/4182, Jan. 1892, Cons. 15, p. 15.

<sup>55</sup> GI to SS, 6 Jan. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(v), pp. 37-45.

<sup>56</sup> Kashmir Resident to India, 30 Dec. 1891, Lansdowne Papers/VII(f), p. 400.

<sup>57</sup> George Macartney to Mortimer Durand, 31 Jan. 1892, encl. 2 in GI to SS, 27 April 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(v), pp. 357-58.

trouble with China on account of Hunza.<sup>58</sup> Later the *Taotai*<sup>59</sup> of Kashgar informed Durand that he was sending a Chinese envoy to Gilgit to discuss the future of Hunza. Durand suggested, and the Government of India agreed with him, that the Chinese representative might be allowed a passage and to make any representations, with which the *Taotai* might have charged him ; but on no account should he be permitted to deal directly with the Rajas of Hunza and Nagar. The *Taotai*, however, was assured of the friendly sentiments of the British Government for the Chinese, and was told that the British interference in Hunza, which was within the sphere of influence of the Government of India, in no way marked any departure from their traditional policy of friendship with the Chinese Empire.<sup>60</sup>

Meanwhile, Cross too had become equally anxious to know what arrangements the Viceroy had in mind for the resettlement of Hunza and Nagar.<sup>61</sup> In the absence of a legitimate adult from the ruling family as Safdar Ali's successor Durand suggested that until the complete restoration of order and stability at Hunza, a military force should be retained there, and a Political Officer deputed to supervise the general administration of the country. Otherwise, the administration would remain under Wazir Humayun, half-brother and a rival of Safdar Ali's, as Governor of the state, who would work in subordination to the Political Officer. The subsidies hitherto paid to both the states should in the altered circumstances be altogether stopped, and the State of Nagar ought to be restored, as a matter of clemency, to Jafar Khan who indeed took no leading part in the recent fighting, and was under the complete tutelage of his son, Uzr Khan.<sup>62</sup> Lansdowne was in complete agreement with the views of the Gilgit Agent, and soon issued instructions to implement the measures recommended. It was further provided that the

<sup>58</sup> Macartney to India, 24 Oct. 1891, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 23 March 1892, *ibid.*, pp. 249-50.

<sup>59</sup> Governor in Civil and Military charge.

<sup>60</sup> Encls. in GI to SS, 23 March 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(v), p. 265.

<sup>61</sup> Cross to Lansdowne, 8 Jan. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IX(d), pp. 1-3.

<sup>62</sup> Durand to Kashmir Resident, 20 Jan. 1892, sub-encl. in encl. 1 in GI to SS, 16 March 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(v), pp. 231-33. Uzr Khan was deported to Kashmir.

cost of the administration of the two countries would be met from the revenues of Kashmir ; if they should prove inadequate for the making of roads or the execution of similar works necessary for imperial purposes, the Government of India would be willing to spend on those accounts the sums hitherto enjoyed by the rulers of Hunza and Nagar as subsidies. The arrangement made was "looked upon as merely a temporary expedient". Lansdowne hoped that before long it would be possible to find a suitable candidate from the reigning family to succeed Safdar Ali who must never be allowed to return to Hunza as its ruler.<sup>63</sup>

It was not long before a new ruler for the state of Hunza was found in the person of Muhammad Nazim Khan, a legitimate son of the former Raja Ghazan Khan who was murdered by Safdar Ali. In a duly attested will of his father, recently discovered at Hunza, Nazim was recognised as heir to the chiefship. Although he was a man of ordinary intellect and capacity, his appointment, as Captain Stewart, the Political Officer at Gilgit, ascertained, was likely to be popular. Both Prideaux and Durand agreed with Stewart, and Lansdowne accepted their recommendation in favour of Nazim Khan.<sup>64</sup> But meanwhile the question of interposition of the Chinese authorities in the matter of the Hunza settlement had become a subject of discussion in London. Salisbury was very anxious to avoid any complications with China ; on imperial considerations he 'especially' wanted to be on good terms with that country.<sup>65</sup> The Chinese Legation in London made the most of this weakness ; they prevailed upon Salisbury to secure his consent to Chinese participation in Hunza affairs when a new man was to be set up.<sup>66</sup> Lansdowne's Government was not very willing to concede on this point, but they agreed when two explicit reservations were obtained by the Foreign Secretary : first, that the Chinese representative was only to be there as witness and by express invitation from the Viceroy ; and secondly,

<sup>63</sup> GI to SS, 16 March 1892, and encl. 2, *ibid.*, pp. 225-26, 239-40.

<sup>64</sup> GI to SS, 31 May 1892, and encl. 9, *ibid.*, pp. 557-78, pp. 601-04.

<sup>65</sup> FO to IO, 5 March 1892, PSHC/128, pp. 651-56; FO 65/1436.

<sup>66</sup> Cross to Lansdowne, 18 March 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IX(d), pp. 17-18.

that Chinese participation on this occasion would not be considered a precedent for a similar claim on future occasions.<sup>67</sup> The formal installation of Nazim as Raja of Hunza had to be deferred till the middle of September 1892. When the ceremony was performed, China was represented by Brevet Brigadier-General Chang Hung Chow, but only as an "honoured spectator" and not as an active participant.

In spite of the Government of India's warning to the Amir in 1891 he did not relax his activities upon the Bajaur frontiers. The negotiations of the Indian authorities with Umra Khan provoked the Amir's jealousy and he continued to support the opponents of the Chief of Jandol. Toward the end of 1891 a deliberate move was taken by the Amir's Commander-in-Chief, Ghulam Haidar Khan, in the direction of Bajaur.<sup>68</sup> Finally, at the beginning of 1892, having secured as his allies the Khans of Nawagai and Dir, both of whom were at enmity with Umra Khan, Ghulam Haidar seemed to have resolved to advance into Bajaur. Toward the end of January, Lansdowne was therefore obliged to warn the Amir that the Government of India could never permit his interference in the affairs of Bajaur.<sup>69</sup> The Amir replied that the Bajaur question was to remain in abeyance till he met the Viceroy or received a British Mission to discuss it. At the same time he declared that "Asmar as a matter of urgency should be occupied, because it was the frontier of the country and was included in the limits of Kunar."<sup>70</sup> Meanwhile, the Khan of Asmar, whose daughter was betrothed to the Amir's son, Habibulla Khan, had died, leaving an infant son to succeed him. At this juncture, Asmar was suddenly occupied by Umra Khan who placed his nominee, Jan Khan, a brother of the late Khan of Asmar, upon the throne. This enraged the Amir ; consequently, Ghulam Haidar marched to Asmar and occupied the country whence he threatened Jandol and the rest of Bajaur. The Amir was therefore warned again not to invade Bajaur, and told that the Government of India could not recognise his

<sup>67</sup> India to Resident, 12 May 1892, encl. 17 in GI to SS, 31 May 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(v), pp. 625-26.

<sup>68</sup> Encls. 1-3 in GI to SS, 24 May 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(v), pp.549-51.

<sup>69</sup> Viceroy's *Kharita* to the Amir, 29 Jan. 1892, encl. 7 in *ibid*.

<sup>70</sup> Amir to Viceroy, 25 Feb. 1892, encl. 9 in *ibid*.

rights to Asmar. In fact, he was even asked to vacate the Khan's territories, but Abdur Rahman flatly refused to give up Asmar. He reiterated his determination to chastise Umra Khan if the latter should try to create trouble in Asmar, or even in Nawagai.<sup>71</sup>

The authorities on Indian affairs in London and Simla agreed that the Amir's occupation of Asmar had indeed created a risky situation for Lansdowne's Government. It had brought him to within forty miles of Amul-ul-Mulk's capital whence he could threaten the link between Peshawar and Chitral. At any rate, it was bound to engender a sense of general uneasiness, if not really "very serious troubles" among the tribes. The Viceroy was therefore inclined to turn the Amir out of Asmar, but his Council "was a good deal divided upon the point".<sup>72</sup> Roberts of course agreed with the Viceroy that the Amir should be asked to vacate Asmar,<sup>73</sup> but the opposition of the Council decided Lansdowne to content himself with a warning that any further breach of the peace in the Bajaur region, if attributable to the Amir's aggression, would force the Government of India to ask him to vacate the territory. Even so, he could not still admit the Amir's claim to Asmar, and only deferred the issue till the time came for "a general squaring of accounts with him."<sup>74</sup> Evidently, Lansdowne's prime interest was to preserve the peace of the northern frontiers ; both Chitral and Jandol were therefore warned to refrain from hostile activities against the Amir.

The misunderstanding with Abdur Rahman about Asmar was one of several points that led Lansdowne to write to the Home Government for their sanction to a British mission to Kabul for a settlement of frontier questions. Roberts was to be the head of the mission, and its object to lay down the frontier between Afghanistan and India in such a manner that British control over the independent tribes on the north-west frontier from Baluchistan to Chitral could be well secured.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Encl. 1 in GI to SS, 9 Aug. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), pp. 257-58.

<sup>72</sup> Lansdowne to Cross, 28 June 1892, Lansdowne Papers/X(d), p. 76.

<sup>73</sup> Notes dated 7 and 25 July 1892, Roberts Papers/96/2, p. 183, and p. 1189.

<sup>74</sup> Lansdowne to Ardagh, 6 June 1892, Ardagh Papers/11Box File 2.

<sup>75</sup> GI to SS, 16 August 1892, and encl., Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), pp. 283-306. and pp. 311-12.



The proposal of course was not the first of its kind. Abdur Rahman himself was eager to receive such a mission. In the course of the last two years he had twice asked for it in order to have the outstanding frontier issues between the two countries properly settled. Even then, owing to his pre-occupations with the Hazara rebellion—and no less for his personal dislike for Roberts, the hero of the Second Afghan War,—Abdur Rahman expressed his inability to receive the British mission, and postponed its despatch.<sup>76</sup> Lansdowne was eager to press for an early reception of the mission but Kimberley advised caution. As a result, the Amir was allowed to retain his troops at Asmar pending a settlement of all the frontier questions which, the Viceroy hoped, would be effected at no distant date.<sup>77</sup>

If the Afghan occupation of Asmar led directly to the question of demarcation of the Indo-Afghan frontiers, it was the Amir's activities on the Pamirs that raised the question of their delimitation. In fact, throughout 1891-92 Abdur Rahman had been busy securing his hold over his eastern frontiers and acquiring as much territory as possible, so that at the time of delimitation he could claim all that was in his effective possession. He was playing the same game as the Russians were to the north of the Hindu Kush, and the British to the south of it. It was indeed this triangular contest for territorial possessions and spheres of influence in which lay the logic of both the Durand and Pamir delimitations.

Somatash, a small place on the Alichur Pamir, was abandoned by the Chinese to the Afghans in 1885. Ney Elias found it in the possession of the Afghans, but early in 1891 Younghusband, pursuant perhaps to his instructions to encourage Chinese occupation of the debatable land in the Pamirs, had secured the withdrawal of the Afghan force from Somatash. This created an embarrassing situation as the Amir forthwith complained against Younghusband's action, with the result that the

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<sup>76</sup> Amir to Viceroy, 3 August 1892, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 13 Sept. 1892, *ibid.*, pp. 799-802.

<sup>77</sup> Viceroy to Amir, 29 August 1892, encl. 4 in GI to SS, 13 Sept. 1892, *ibid.*, pp. 802-04.

Government of India was obliged to disown it. Towards the end of 1891 an Afghan force returned to Somatash, and in the face of Yanoff's threat, both the Chinese and the Afghans worked in co-operation for some time. But this unnatural alliance was soon dissolved when the Afghans in early 1892 forced the Chinese to withdraw and occupied Somatash. This evoked a protest from the Chinese whereupon the Government of India again found itself in an awkward position.<sup>78</sup>

The situation seemed to deteriorate because, soon afterwards, the Amir advanced a claim to Bozai Gumbaz. Since Young-husband's expulsion from that territory the Government of India had been unable to determine whether Bozai actually belonged to Afghanistan or the so-called no-man's land beyond the Afghan frontiers. When the complaint against Yanoff was initially made at St. Petersburg, it was claimed that Bozai Gumbaz was in Afghan Wakhan. But only a few days later it was affirmed that Bozai lay beyond Afghan territories. The vacillation of the Indian Government not only irritated the Foreign Office in London ; it annoyed the Amir as well. His sullen wrath found expression when he was afterwards turned out of Somatash by the Russians. The misunderstanding about the ownership of Bozai Gumbaz, coupled with the Amir's activities at Somatash, necessitated a clear understanding about the extent of Afghan territories on the Pamirs. Salisbury was quick to point it out to the India Office ;<sup>79</sup> Lansdowne, too, was aware of it. But his difficulties were that it was not easy to reconcile the interests of China and Afghanistan on the Pamirs in order to keep the Russians out. As already mentioned, after the policy of encouraging the Amir to extend his territories in the direction of the Pamirs was discarded by the Home authorities in 1888, Lansdowne pursued a new line—that of setting up a Chinese wall against the Russians. But the Chinese soon proved to be "a broken reed to lean upon". The result was that the existing gap between their territories and the Afghan

<sup>78</sup> Salisbury to Walsham, 16 June 1892, FO 65/1438; FO to IO, 27 June 1892, PSHC/131, pp. 381-82; GI to SS, 14 Dec. 1892, 22 March 1893, 15 August 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), (vii) and (viii), pp. 1193-1212, 491-514, 273-90.

<sup>79</sup> FO to IO, 31 Dec. 1891, PSHC/126, pp. 1117-41.

remained as usual a stern reality.<sup>80</sup> It was not the policy of Lansdowne's Government, nor of the Home authorities, to acquire any land upon the Pamirs ; and Russia made the most of this anomalous situation. The only solution indeed seemed to be the delimitation of the disputed territories.

Even if the ownership of Bozai Gumbaz was uncertain, the English Foreign Office had been busy pressing St. Petersburg for an apology for Yanoff's conduct in expelling Younghusband.<sup>81</sup> The Russian Government was "very obstinate at first", but subsequently offered a "full apology". Both Cross and Lansdowne were exceedingly happy "with the Russian *amende*" : they congratulated Morier, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, for admirably handling the whole question.<sup>82</sup> But before long a fresh Russian move on the Pamirs was made. As early as January 1892, reports were received of a possible Russian advance on the Pamirs in the next spring. This was confirmed early in March when George Macartney informed that preparations were apace in Russian Turkistan. Within two weeks 300 Russians were on the Pamirs, and on 22 June Yanoff drove the Afghans out of Somatash.<sup>83</sup>

This was a repetition of Bozai Gumbaz, but the effect it produced was far greater.<sup>84</sup> Delimitation of course had been talked of after Younghusband's expulsion from Bozai, but beyond that there was no more enthusiasm, not even at Whitehall. Cross was "much astonished that no question has been asked upon the subject in either House of Parliament" ;<sup>85</sup> and after the first impulse had subsided, the British Foreign Office was positively lukewarm.<sup>86</sup> All that was really insisted on was a

<sup>80</sup> Tel. from Walsham to FO, 29 Jan. 1892, PSHC/127, pp. 1023-25.

<sup>81</sup> Correspondence between IO and FO, Sept. 1891, PSHC/124, pp. 933-65; Seaver, G. *op. cit.*, pp. 145-46.

<sup>82</sup> Cross to Lansdowne, 4 Feb. 1892, and 25 March 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IX(d), p. 7 and pp. 19-20 ; *The Times*, 26 Feb. 1892 ; Lansdell, H. *Chinese Central Asia*, (London 1893), vol. II, p. 73.

<sup>83</sup> GI to SS, 21 Sept. 1892, and enclosures, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), pp. 823-34.

<sup>84</sup> British newspapers teemed with news-articles on the Pamir incident. See for instance, *The Times*, Sept. 1892.

<sup>85</sup> Cross to Lansdowne, 25 March 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IX(d), pp. 19-20.

<sup>86</sup> FO to IO, 31 Dec. 1891, PSHC/126, pp. 1117-41.

formal apology ; when that was obtained, the authorities at Whitehall and Simla looked contented. But after the Russian occupation of Somatash not only was delimitation considered to be the basic minimum,<sup>87</sup> but an independent Commission by England in the event of Russia disagreeing to delimitation was also discussed.<sup>88</sup> The idea, however, was not pushed to an extreme owing to the obvious difficulties of the Pamir situation. The fact is, that the entire question of division of territories in this region was so inextricably mixed up with the Agreement of 1873 that any hasty decision was likely to lead to serious complications. That agreement neither justified the Amir's acquisition of the trans-Oxus provinces of Roshan and Shignan, nor did it support his pretensions to territories on the Pamirs to the east of Wood's Lake. Besides, the idea of a Chinese wall, as already discussed, had completely broken down, and the British policy was not to acquire territories on the Pamirs. Was then the entire region outside the limits of the agreement of 1873 to be surrendered to Russia as China had suggested, and Russian territories allowed to be coterminous with the limits of the Indian Empire to the north ? This certainly was a question which could not be easily answered. At any rate, it was contrary to the traditional British policy in Central Asia. Diplomacy therefore became the handmaid of British policy in keeping Russia out of the Pamirs. Lansdowne suggested that the British Foreign Office should secure Yanoff's withdrawal by diplomatic pressure at St. Petersburg, and arrange for joint delimitation.<sup>89</sup> On 5 September 1892, Kimberley passed the Viceroy's suggestion on to Rosebery, the new Foreign Secretary. The very next day the latter instructed Morier to press for delimitation.<sup>90</sup>

The Russo-Afghan collision at Somatash whipped the Government of India to action. Roberts suggested sending a

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<sup>87</sup> Within almost a week, Stewart Bayley, Political Secretary at the India Office, urged that the British Foreign office should take up the question of delimitation with the Russian Government at St. Petersburg without delay. Note dated 1 July 1892, PSM/A87.

<sup>88</sup> Viceroy to SS, 9 Aug. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IX(d), pp. 88-89 ; Kimberley to Lansdowne, 1 Sept. 1892, and 8 Sept. 1892. *ibid.*, pp. 56-58 ; Tel. 4, Rosebery to Morier, 19.1.93, PSHC/135, p. 725.

<sup>89</sup> Tel. from Viceroy, 1 Sept. 1892, PSHC/132, pp. 415-17.

<sup>90</sup> Rosebery to Morier, 6 Sept. 1892, *ibid.*, pp. 1541-43.

British officer to the Pamirs to watch the proceedings of the Russians, but Lansdowne opposed the idea, and preferred to wait till the results of the Pamir negotiations should be known. Even so, he acknowledged that the recent action of the Russians in the Pamirs rendered the further strengthening of the Gilgit Agency absolutely essential.<sup>91</sup> Not that Lansdowne seriously believed in the possibility of a Russian invasion from this quarter. In this respect he fully shared the opinion of his Commander-in-Chief that any large scale attempt by the Russians to descend upon the southern slopes of the mountain barrier was likely to prove futile. But both were in complete agreement that small and lightly equipped bodies of troops under officers of the Yanoff type could easily set at unrest the tribes upon the northern frontiers. The only remedy, as Roberts had suggested, was to extend and consolidate British influence upon the neighbouring chiefships ; Lansdowne agreed that the way to do that was to strengthen further the British Agency at Gilgit. As he observed, the Gilgit outpost of the Indian Empire ought to be "a centre of British influence" upon the northern frontiers of Kashmir.<sup>92</sup>

The Viceroy's conviction was strengthened by a recent declaration by the Amir of his intention to withdraw from eastern Wakhan, a territory to which he could legitimately lay his claims according to the Agreement of 1873. Dissatisfied with the Pamir policy of the Indian Government, the Amir announced his decision in July 1892, shortly after the discomfiture of his troops at Somatash.<sup>93</sup> Lansdowne immediately saw the danger of his proposed move. It would at once widen the gap between the Afghan and the Chinese frontiers upon the Pamirs which it had been the object of the Indian Government to seal against a Russian encroachment since the time of Dufferin's administration. Thereby the Russians would be better able "to establish themselves at the foot of the Hindu Kush" and disturb the peace of the tribal regions, situated to the south of it.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>91</sup> GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), pp. 897-903.

<sup>92</sup> Lansdowne to Kimberley, 3 Nov. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IX(d), pp. 139-43; Note by Roberts on Gilgit, 2 May 1892, Roberts Papers/96/2, pp. 1113-15.

<sup>93</sup> GI to SS, 12 Oct. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), pp. 883-92.

<sup>94</sup> GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1892, *ibid.*, pp. 897-903.

Nearer home, it was the hostile attitude of the Chilas State towards the Gilgit Agency that decided the Government of India to reinforce it. Practically since the establishment of the British Agency in 1889 Chilas had maintained a persistent attitude of hostility towards it. At the end of 1891 they openly assumed an attitude of defiance, threatened to murder the news-writer of the Kashmir Darbar, and actually expelled him from their country.<sup>95</sup> Nothing could be done then as Durand was busy with the Hunza affairs. But soon after the termination of the Hunza campaign Durand suggested that the time had come to remove the Chilasi menace, enforce a British official on them, and secure if necessary a right to construct a road through their territory. But Brackenbury, the Military Member in Lansdowne's Council, was opposed to any such move,<sup>96</sup> and eventually, upon Prideaux's advice, it was decided not to take any immediate action.<sup>97</sup> Even so, both Prideaux and Durand recommended that the Gilgit Agency should be further strengthened to control the tribes and states along the northern frontier of Kashmir. Their views were fully shared by Roberts,<sup>98</sup> and Lansdowne was not slow to come to the conclusion that it would at least be necessary to increase the Gilgit staff by 2 Political Officers—one for Hunza and Nagar, and another for Chitral—and 4 Military Officers.<sup>99</sup> As Lansdowne explained,

“the near approach of the Russians renders it necessary for us to keep Political Officers in both Chitral and Hunza, to obtain early information and to counteract Russian activity.”<sup>100</sup>

And with the support of the majority of his Council, his Commander-in-Chief, the Kashmir officials, and most of all,

<sup>95</sup> Encl. 1 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1892, *ibid.*, pp. 917-24.

<sup>96</sup> Brackenbury to Lansdowne, 21 March 1892, Lansdowne Papers/VII(g), p. 185.

<sup>97</sup> Kashmir Resident to India, 13 April 1892, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), pp. 917-19.

<sup>98</sup> Note dated 14 April 1892, Roberts Papers/96/2, pp. 1101-03.

<sup>99</sup> Lansdowne to Kimberley, 19 Oct. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IX(d), pp. 124-27.

<sup>100</sup> GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), pp. 897-903.

his Foreign Secretary, Sir Mortimer Durand,<sup>101</sup> the Viceroy ordered the officers to proceed to Gilgit in anticipation of the sanction of the Secretary of State for India.

Lansdowne's recommendations were received at the India Office with mixed feelings. Even then it was difficult to deny "that on the general question of increasing the Agent's staff the Government of India have made out a good case."<sup>102</sup> Kimberley was "reluctantly obliged to admit that we cannot safely leave such points as Chitral, Hunza and Nagar, and the Indus Valley tribes open to" the Russians. Sanction to Lansdowne's proposals was therefore ultimately given. But since Kimberley apprehended the annexation of territories upon the northern frontiers, the Viceroy was urged to see to it that his officers did not unnecessarily interfere in the affairs of the tribes to the north of Kashmir, and that they were restrained from "the tendency to multiply political relations and responsibilities" in that region.<sup>103</sup>

Events soon justified Kimberley's apprehensions. In October 1892 the headmen of the small state of Gor came to Gilgit, and asked that they might be visited by a British Officer. Their object was to cultivate closer relations with the Gilgit authorities, and to come to some arrangement by which they might be protected from the marauding proclivities of the neighbouring Chilas. Both Durand and Robertson considered the invitation "too good an opportunity" to establish closer relations with the tribes. Prideaux regarded it as "very important", and Lansdowne's sanction for a mission to Gor was easily obtained.<sup>104</sup> Accordingly, on 11 November, Surgeon-Major Robertson started for Gor with a small escort. It was

<sup>101</sup> Durand to Lansdowne, 18 Sept. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/VII(h), pp. 218-19; Sykes, P. *op. cit.*, p. 182. There was a feeling in certain quarters that it was Sir Mortimer Durand who was inspiring Lansdowne to pursue a forward policy on the northern frontiers.

<sup>102</sup> Bayley's Minute on the Reorganisation of the Gilgit Agency, 17 Nov. 1892, PSM/A88.

<sup>103</sup> Kimberley to Lansdowne, 24 Nov. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IX(d), pp. 83-84; SS to GI, 2 Dec. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(ix), pp. 503-06. In the original India Office draft Lansdowne's measures without the previous consent of the Secretary of State were even criticised as "embarrassing and irregular." PSDI/18, pp. 355-62.

<sup>104</sup> GI to SS, 15 Feb. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vii), p. 385.

arranged that some of the Gor elders should go in advance and inform the Chilasis of the peaceful nature of Robertson's visit. That the Goris did not, and Robertson's movements aroused the suspicion of the Chilasi tribes. It soon transpired that the tribes meant to attack the British party. This put Robertson in a difficult position, but he considered retreat to be dangerous. So he pushed on and took the small Chilasi village of Thalpen. On 30 November, having meanwhile been reinforced, he took Chilas after a heavy fight. A garrison of 300 Kashmir Imperial Service troops was left at Chilas under Major Daniell, and the construction of a mule road from Gilgit was taken in hand. Durand considered it necessary to maintain the position, partly for the security of Gilgit, and partly because withdrawal might precipitate a tribal uprising.<sup>105</sup>

The Government of India at first consented only to a temporary occupation till peace was completely restored. But events soon forced them to change their decision. Perhaps the increasing activities of the British garrison at Chilas let the tribes suspect that the occupation would be a permanent one. Whatever it was, early in March 1893 a body of over 1200 tribesmen attacked the fort at Chilas. The attack was repulsed, but Daniell lost his life in the fight. The troops in Chilas were then strongly reinforced, and the mule road from Gilgit was completed. Meanwhile, both Barr, the Kashmir Resident, and Durand had strongly recommended that Chilas, like Hunza and Nagar, should be brought under the absolute control of the Gilgit Agency by keeping troops in that country, and reserving at the same time the right of the British Government to construct roads through the territory of Chilas.<sup>106</sup>

By this time the situation at Chitral had also taken a sudden turn, so that in the light of the altered situation the policy of the Government of India regarding the northern frontiers had to be reconsidered. In the same month as the Gor elders paid

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<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, Durand, A.G. *op. cit.*, pp. 273-82; Bruce, C.G. *Twenty Years in the Himalaya* (London 1910), pp. 195-209.

<sup>106</sup> GI to SS, 11 July 1893, and enclosures, Lansdowne Papers/IB(viii), pp.69-73.



a visit to Gilgit, Aman-ul-Mulk, the Mehtar of Chitral, died. At the time of his death, his nominee to the throne, Nizam, was at Yasin, and Afzal who was at Chitral seized power. Nizam was not capable of holding his own and fled to Gilgit. Immediately after establishing himself in power Afzal tendered his allegiance to the Indian Government and invited them to send a British officer to Chitral. Lansdowne recognised Afzal as the *de facto* Mehtar and hoped to find in him a trustworthy ally who would help to strengthen the Gilgit Agency.<sup>107</sup>

The expectation, however, did not last very long. Up to the beginning of November 1892, it seemed that affairs were settling down, and the Government of India were considering the desirability of sending a mission to Chitral as wished by the new Mehtar. The only source of anxiety was Umra Khan, the Jandol Chief, who took advantage of the prevailing confusion and occupied Nasrat at the southern end of the Chitral Valley. An attempt to bring about an amicable settlement between Umra Khan and the Chitral ruler would have been one of the first aims of the proposed mission. But about the middle of November the situation at Chitral suddenly took a bad turn. Sher Afzal, a brother of Aman-ul-Mulk, who had been a refugee in Badakshan for many years, descended upon Chitral and killed Afzal-ul-Mulk. When Nizam heard of this change in the state of affairs, he informed the British Agent at Gilgit that he was marching against Sher Afzal, and that if he should succeed in his attempt to secure the throne he would agree to British officers being stationed in Chitral and to the establishment of a telegraph line. His professions of loyalty to the British Government induced Durand to allow him to go to Chitral.<sup>108</sup> Nizam met with complete success in his venture : the force that was sent against him by Sher Afzal went over to Nizam, while the former fled to the Afghan Commander-in-Chief at Asmar.<sup>109</sup>

Lansdowne was pleased with this turn of events and

<sup>107</sup> GI to SS, 19 Oct. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), pp. 937-51; Young-husband, F.E. *op. cit.*, p. 349.

<sup>108</sup> GI to SS, 28 Dec. 1892, and encls., Lansdowne Papers/IB(vi), pp. 1275-97; Younghusband, F.E. *op. cit.*, p. 350; Newman H. *Umra Khan and the Chitral Campaign* (Lahore 1897), Chap. II.

<sup>109</sup> Durand to Roberts, 27 Nov. 1892, Roberts Papers/Box File D $\frac{1}{2}$ , R25/6.

sanctioned the British mission to Chitral, especially because Nizam had again asked for one. Accordingly Robertson, accompanied by Younghusband and Lieut. C.G. Bruce, and with an escort of 50 Sikhs under Lieut. J. L. R. Gordon, left for Chitral where the party arrived on 25 January 1893. Nizam was profuse in his expressions of loyalty, but not long after his arrival Robertson reported that the situation at Chitral was very unsatisfactory. Nizam was disliked by his people ; Sher Afzal's return was eagerly expected by many ; Umra Khan was threatening the southern frontiers of the country ; and worst of all, the Amir was intriguing with Umra. As Robertson reported, every mosque and bazar were ringing with war.<sup>110</sup> Lansdowne was not disposed to retain the Chitral mission any more than as a temporary expedient. Robertson's deputation was to recognise Nizam as *de facto* ruler of the country, and then to leave him to look after his own affairs. He accordingly instructed the Gilgit Agent to withdraw the mission. Fortunately, before Robertson left Chitral toward the close of May, the situation there had somewhat improved. Even so, the whole mission could not be withdrawn, and Robertson had to leave behind Younghusband and Lieutenant Gordon with the whole of his escort.<sup>111</sup> Meantime Robertson had submitted his proposals for the future arrangement in Chitral as a state under the supervision of the Gilgit Agent. They included *inter alia* the retention of a British officer in Chitral, and further reinforcement for the Agency at Gilgit.<sup>112</sup>

Thus the question of future arrangements in Chilas and Chitral came up for the consideration of the Government of India at one and the same time. Obviously, the question was how best the British influence in these states could be maintained in the face of the Russian advance upon the Pamirs. Lansdowne was inclined to support the recommendations of

<sup>110</sup> GI to SS, 4 Jan. 1893, and encls., Lansdowne Papers/IB(vii), pp. 1-16.

<sup>111</sup> Robertson's Report, 6/17 June 1893, encl. 1 in GI to SS, 29 Aug. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IB(viii), pp. 639-43; GI to SS, 11 July 1893, *ibid.* ; Seaver, G. *op. cit.*, p. 156.

<sup>112</sup> Robertson to Burr, 18 March 1893, sub. encl. in encl. 2 in GI to SS, 11 July 1893, *ibid.*, pp. 75-96. For a description of Robertson's mission to Chitral, *vide* Robertson, G.S. *Chitral*, (London 1898), Chap. IV.

his Kashmir officials, but Brackenbury, Barbour and Pritchard, members of the Viceroy's Council, were opposed to a policy of interference in these states. The question was discussed in the Council at the beginning of June 1893, and it was decided by the majority that a British officer with an escort of Kashmir troops should be stationed in Chitral; that Chilas was not to be evacuated; and that a road should be opened up the Khagan valley (Hazara) for the purpose of easy access to Chilas.<sup>113</sup>

The dissenting members deprecated the idea of interference in Chilas because they believed that the policy might lead to a general coalition of tribes upon the northern frontiers against the Gilgit Agency.<sup>114</sup> Brackenbury warned the Viceroy "that in this direction Your Excellency is entering upon a dangerous and very costly policy".<sup>115</sup> As regards Chitral, he argued that if Russia was not allowed to extend her influence south of the parallel of Lake Victoria, there was no need to retain a British Agent at Chitral which might well provoke a coalition of the tribes against the British Agency. Besides, if Russia was allowed to dispossess the Amir of Roshan and Shignan, as was likely to be the case, the best course would be to let the Amir have Chitral as compensation, because that would give him a direct interest in retaining his hold over the narrow strip of Wakhan.<sup>116</sup>

Although Barbour and Pritchard did not support Brackenbury's proposal for ceding Chitral to the Amir, they thought that the country could yet be better defended against a Russian attack with the assistance of the Afghan ruler, and by making use of the route through Jalalabad and the Kunar Valley. To secure that end they suggested "a cordial understanding with the Amir" rather than an effort to control the tribes upon the northern frontier from the direction of Gilgit.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>113</sup> GI to SS, 11 July 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IB(viii), pp. 53-63.

<sup>114</sup> Minute of dissent by Barbour and Pritchard, 8 July 1893, encl. 5 in GI to SS, 11 July 1893, *ibid.*, pp. 103-04.

<sup>115</sup> Brackenbury to Lansdowne, 3 April 1893, Lansdowne Papers/VII(i), p. 278(a).

<sup>116</sup> Summarised in GI to SS, 11 July 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IB(viii), pp. 53-63. Detailed in Lansdowne's Note on Chitral, 6 May 1893, Lansdowne Papers/XIII, pp. 598-612.

<sup>117</sup> Minute of dissent, encl. 5 in GI to SS, 11 July 1893, *ibid.*, pp. 103-04.

Lansdowne rejected all these arguments. He did not believe that the retention of Kashmir troops in Chilas, if compensated by a moderate subsidy and an assurance that the Government of India had no desire to annex the country, would lead to any trouble. On the contrary, it would impress the Chilas, who had hitherto been thoroughly ill-disposed towards their suzerain, that "we are strong enough to hold our own" and capable of maintaining the peace of the country.<sup>118</sup> Indeed, the importance of Chilas for the safety of the Gilgit Agency was clear enough, and Lansdowne believed with Robertson that Chilas was the "sheet anchor" of British policy upon the northern frontiers.<sup>119</sup> As for Chitral, he argued that it would be sheer "madness to encourage the Afghan occupation" of the country.<sup>120</sup> Since at least Lytton's time Chitral had been under the suzerainty of the Kashmir Darbar, while the British Government had agreed to uphold the arrangement of 1878 entered into by the Maharaja and the Mehtar. Lansdowne did not deny that there was risk in maintaining British officers in remote places like Chitral, but his policy, he said, could not be condemned so long as it was not given a fair trial. Nor was he persuaded that the loss of Roshan and Shignan would alienate the Amir more than he already was. Abdur Rahman, he affirmed, had been accustomed to the idea that he might not be allowed to retain those provinces; besides, there was no certainty that the Amir would be reconciled even if given Chitral for Roshan and Shignan. Lansdowne believed that if he continued to recognise *de facto* Mehtars, as he did in Nizam's case, a strong man "was eventually bound to arise in Chitral through the process of the survival of the fittest."<sup>121</sup> Even then, he argued, Chitral could hardly hope to stand alone :

"it must be under the influence of Russia or of the Amir, or under ours. We do not mean it to

<sup>118</sup> Lansdowne to Brackenbury, 8 April 1893, Lansdowne Papers/VII(i), pp. 163-64.

<sup>119</sup> Lansdowne to Kimberley, 12 Sept. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), pp. 136-39.

<sup>120</sup> Lansdowne to Kimberley, 3 May 1893, *ibid.*, pp. 62-66.

<sup>121</sup> Lansdowne's Note on Chitral Affairs, 6 May 1893, Lansdowne Papers/XIII, pp. 598-612.

be under Russian influence, and we do not believe that it would be safe, or just, to hand it over to the Amir. We must, therefore, look after it ourselves",

and in that case, he could not do less than he had proposed to do.<sup>122</sup> In fact, Lansdowne thoroughly mistrusted the Amir ; he believed that the cession of Chitral would merely afford him an opportunity for using it as a focus of intrigues upon the northern frontiers. He fully shared Durand's view that for the preservation of British influence upon Chitral it must "remain a portion of the Gilgit Agency".<sup>123</sup>

All this was reiterated in the despatch of the Government of India, dated 11 July 1893,<sup>124</sup> which asked for the Secretary of State's sanction to their proposed measures in Chilas and Chitral, and those for increasing the strength of the Gilgit Agency.<sup>125</sup> Kimberley "had no doubt about Chilas and the Khagan Road", but Chitral was "a much more perplexing matter". Both he and Bayley agreed that it could not be handed over to the Amir, and that it was necessary to keep it as "a portion of the Gilgit Agency, i.e. under British influence".<sup>126</sup> Kimberley admitted that Lansdowne's proposal was the best if permanent retention of Chitral were intended. But no measure that was likely to increase the liabilities of the British Government commended itself to the Secretary of State for India unless it was proved that there was "absolutely no tolerable alternative".<sup>127</sup> Besides, he was not willing to decide upon any permanent measures so long as the results of the Durand Mission to Kabul or the Pamir boundary negotiations were not known. Approval was therefore given to Lansdowne's proposal for

<sup>122</sup> Lansdowne to Kimberley, 11 July 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), pp. 97-99.

<sup>123</sup> Durand to Ardagh, 28 March 1893, Lansdowne Papers/VII(i), pp. 264-65.

<sup>124</sup> Lansdowne Papers/IB(viii), pp. 53-63.

The addition proposed was a Bengal Infantry Regiment, PSM/A92.

<sup>125</sup> Kimberley's Note dated 12 August 1893, PSDI/19, p. 12. Bayley's note on Gilgit Agency, Chilas and Chitral, n.d. PSM/A92.

<sup>127</sup> Kimberley to Lansdowne, 18 August 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), pp. 65-68.

Chilas, Chitral and Gilgit only as temporary measures which were to continue till at least the contemplated settlements with Afghanistan and Russia did not come to a satisfactory conclusion.<sup>128</sup>

Meanwhile, Morier had approached the Russian Government at St. Petersburg for a discussion of the Pamir question and its future delimitation. The proposal was favourably received, but for some time no basis for a discussion could be agreed upon.<sup>129</sup> Rosebery felt some anxiety on that account, and both he and Kimberley suspected that Russia would send a filibustering expedition to the Pamirs as soon as the weather should permit. Indeed, Kimberley apprehended that Russia meant to postpone any delimitation as long as she had not established herself on the line she was determined to occupy.<sup>130</sup>

These fears were soon justified by Russia's claim for a frontier upon the Pamirs. On 13 April 1893, Staal, the Russian Ambassador in London, demanded the evacuation of the trans-Oxus provinces of Roshan and Shignan by the Amir in return for the abandonment of Darwaz by Bokhara. This was in conformity with the letter of the agreement of 1873, but on the Pamirs the Russian claim went beyond it by their claim to the line of the Wakhan Darya as far east as the longitude of Lake Victoria.<sup>131</sup>

Lansdowne was prepared to relinquish Roshan and Shignan to Russia, even at the risk of alienating the Amir, but he was determined not to allow Russia a line of frontier which would afford her a happy hunting ground upon the slopes of the Hindu Kush. But the new demand made by Staal would mean exactly what Lansdowne wished to avoid, and so, when urged by Kimberley to state the "minimum of frontier" that would satisfy

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<sup>128</sup> SS to GI, 1 Sept. 1893, PSDI/19, pp. 141-46.

<sup>129</sup> Tels. to and from Morier, 19 January 1893, and 21 January 1893, followed by communications from Morier dated 21 Jan. 1893 and 7 Feb. 1893, PSHC/135, pp. 725-27, 967-88, 1203.

<sup>130</sup> Kimberley to Lansdowne, 19 Jan. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), pp. 5-7.

<sup>131</sup> Rosebery to Morier, 13 April 1893, PSHC/138, pp. 231-38; also FO 65/1463.

the Indian Government,<sup>132</sup> he proposed the line of Oxus to Wood's Lake and thence a line drawn due east to the Chinese frontier.<sup>133</sup> Both Rosebery and Kimberley were in complete agreement with the Viceroy as to the necessity of keeping Russia at a safe distance from the Indian frontiers.<sup>134</sup>

Even so, diplomatic considerations demanded that Rosebery should ask for more than he was willing to accept. Accordingly, in reply to Staal's claims of 13 April, Rosebery demanded *status quo* on the Upper Oxus west of Lake Victoria, and a line to the Chinese frontier east of it. He argued that the 1873 agreement had tentatively defined the boundaries of Afghanistan, but had by no means assigned the territories beyond Afghan limits to anybody else. They should therefore be treated as no-man's land, the division of which between the contesting parties ought to be fair and just.<sup>135</sup> Even while thus arguing, Rosebery was prepared to climb down if Russia should insist upon the Afghan evacuation of Roshan and Shignan. That is why he had urged Kimberley to enquire about the Viceroy's "minimum of frontier", and this was reiterated toward the end of April.<sup>136</sup> Although Lansdowne suggested that the British Foreign Office should begin by standing out for the retention of Roshan and Shignan, they could eventually fall back on Wood's Lake line as a compromise.<sup>137</sup> This was precisely the stand taken by Rosebery in negotiating with the Russian Government. As was anticipated, Staal objected to the counter-claims of the British Foreign Office, and to keep the negotiations open, Rosebery was obliged to admit that the retention of Roshan and Shignan for the Amir would not be insisted on. On his part, Staal acknowledged that everything beyond the 1873 line was not necessarily Russian.<sup>138</sup>

While the prospects of the Pamir negotiations thus seemed

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<sup>132</sup> SS to Viceroy, 23 March 1893, Lansdowne Papers/XI(d), p. 43.

<sup>133</sup> Viceroy to SS, 27 March 1893, *ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>134</sup> Kimberley to Lansdowne, 13 Oct. 1892, Lansdowne Papers/IX(d), pp. 69-72.

<sup>135</sup> Memo. to Staal, 24 April 1893, FO 65/1463.

<sup>136</sup> Kimberley to Lansdowne, 21 April 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), pp. 30-31.

<sup>137</sup> Lansdowne to Kimberley, 17 May 1893, *ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>138</sup> Rosebery to Howard, 19 May 1893, FO 65/1464.

hopeful, Lansdowne, under Brackenbury's influence,<sup>139</sup> suddenly made a *volte face* and stood out for the retention of Roshan and Shignan for Abdur Rahman. He was uncertain about the Amir's attitude, and thought that he would be accused of bad faith. He also apprehended that Abdur Rahman might ultimately upset all calculations. Surprisingly, the Viceroy was even prepared to break off negotiations with Russia, and to gain time, he advised Whitehall to prolong the negotiations in order that Russia might not send another expedition to the Pamirs. He was of course aware that everything would "depend upon the European outlook at the moment" and abrupt termination of the discussions would be no solution.<sup>140</sup>

But a rupture with Russia on the question of Roshan and Shignan was the last thing that the authorities in London were prepared to allow. Rosebery and Kimberley agreed that the British nation would not support a war with Russia on this account.<sup>141</sup> More important than that, the possibility of a Franco-Russian alliance against Great Britain was what the authorities at Whitehall "considered the most formidable of all possible combinations against us".<sup>142</sup> Kimberley therefore persuaded Lansdowne to accept the surrender of Roshan and Shignan as a compromise ; he reminded the Viceroy that this was the suggestion he made before the negotiations began. He of course promised to retain the strip of Wakhan, north

<sup>139</sup> GI to SS, 17 May 1893, and encl. (Brackenbury's Minute dated 30 April 1893), Lansdowne Papers/IB(vii), pp. 697-704.

<sup>140</sup> Letter to Kimberley, 4 July 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), pp. 95-97.

<sup>141</sup> There was a joint IO and FO meeting at the Foreign Office on 13 July 1893. Rosebery, Kimberley, Roberts, Bayley and Sir P. Currie were present in the meeting. The decision was to continue the negotiations. Minute on the meeting in FO 65/1487. For Rosebery's attitude as regards England's involvement in a European war, Crewe, Marquess of, *Lord Rosebery* (London 1931), II, pp. 425-27.

<sup>142</sup> Kimberley to Lansdowne, 27 July 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), pp. 59-60; 7 July 1893, *ibid.*, pp. 52-53. British relation with France had considerably deteriorated over the Siamese question, and both the FO and the IO were considerably annoyed on this account. The coincidence of the Siamese and the Pamir crises in 1893 made the British Government suspect that France and Russia would combine in the event of any of the two powers going to war with Great Britain. This fear indeed was not unfounded. *Vide* Taylor, A. J. P. *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p. 344. For the Siamese crisis, *vide* FO 17/1178, FO 69/150. For Rosebery's annoyance, Crewe, Marquess of, *op. cit.*, II, 425-27.



of the Panja, for the Amir, and suggested that concessions could also be made to him elsewhere on the frontier for the loss of Roshan and Shignan.<sup>143</sup>

If the Government of India could be persuaded to accept a compromise on the basis of the Afghan evacuation of Roshan and Shignan, the attitude of the Russian Government considerably changed about the middle of 1893. The military party was in the ascendant at St. Petersburg and persuaded the Czar to demand a line on the Pamirs that would include Bozai Gumbaz within Russian limits. Both Rosebery and Kimberley considered this 'inadmissible' and asked for Lansdowne's opinion.<sup>144</sup> The Viceroy thought that the recent Russian encroachment was 'outrageous'; he accordingly suggested that her insistence on Bozai Gumbaz must be met with a "distinct announcement that a perseverance in these demands involves a rupture of diplomatic relations, and possibly a declaration of war."<sup>145</sup> He of course believed that Russia would never venture a war with England on such an issue, and agreed with Brackenbury that her policy was one of bluff and bluster :<sup>146</sup>

"I confess that I should have thought that, if we had stood firm, Russia would probably have to come to terms sooner than provoke a rupture."<sup>147</sup>

Whether this was so was never put to the test, but on the question of Bozai Gumbaz Russia was certainly not prepared to "provoke a rupture". Indeed, Staal had admitted that the recent claim by Russia to Bozai Gumbaz was not the "last word" in the Pamir negotiations. As Rosebery had rightly presumed, Russia was inclined to agree to a line east of Lake Victoria to the Chinese frontier if Britain should persuade the Amir to

<sup>143</sup> SS to GI, 13 July 1893, Lansdowne Papers/XI(d), pp. 105-6.

<sup>144</sup> Kimberley to Lansdowne, 21 Sept. 1893, *ibid.*, pp. 82-84; Rosebery to Staal, 19 Sept. 1893, PSHC/143, pp. 549-50.

<sup>145</sup> Lansdowne to Kimberley, 18 Oct. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), pp. 155-58; GI to SS, 25 Oct. 1893, *ibid.*/IB(viii), pp. 1071-75.

<sup>146</sup> Brackenbury's Minute, 30 April 1893, encl. in GI to SS, 17 May 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IB(vii), pp. 701-04.

<sup>147</sup> Lansdowne to Kimberley, 1 Aug. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), pp. 113-17.

evacuate Roshan and Shignan.<sup>148</sup> Kimberley therefore urged the Viceroy to send a mission to Kabul in order to explain to the Amir "the course of negotiations with the Russian Government regarding the frontier on the Upper Oxus and in the direction of the Pamirs." He indeed hoped that the success of the Kabul mission would lead to a solution of the Pamir question.<sup>149</sup>

A mission to the Amir for a settlement of the Indo-Afghan frontier had been intermittently considered during the previous years of Lansdowne's Viceroyalty. But it had been hardly ever imagined that so much would depend upon this one mission that would have to settle the frontier problems between India and Afghanistan as well as between Russia and India upon the Pamirs. Although in May 1892 Lansdowne had casually referred to the Amir the need for discussing the frontier on the Upper Oxus, it was not mentioned at all to Pyne,<sup>150</sup> or the Amir in 1893. Hitherto the emphasis, even in respect of the northern frontiers, had been indeed upon Chitral, Bajaur and Asmar, i.e. the tribal regions between Kashmir and Afghanistan. But the Russian threat upon the Pamirs changed the entire complexion of the Afghan Boundary Mission. Durand was instructed to take up the question of Roshan and Shignan first, and then the Indo-Afghan frontier from Chitral downwards only if the Amir should raise it.<sup>151</sup> From the British point of view, Durand was indeed sent to Kabul to settle the most vital problem of the northern frontiers—that of arresting Russian advance towards the Pamirs and the Hindu Kush, so that Kashmir with its dependencies and other tribal regions within the British sphere of influence could be safe from a really potential enemy.

It appears that Durand was entrusted with a rather arduous job ; in reality, however, it turned out to be very different in so far as the northern frontier was concerned. That was because of the difference in attitudes at Simla and Kabul. If the

<sup>148</sup> Rosebery to Staal, 19 Sept. 1893, PSHC/143, pp. 549-50.

<sup>149</sup> Kimberley to Lansdowne, 10 Nov. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(c), p. 94.

<sup>150</sup> Amir's Chief Engineer since 1885, Mr. (afterwards Sir) Sahier Pyne, who was sent to negotiate with the Government of India in 1893, Skyes, *P. op. cit.*, p. 200.

<sup>151</sup> India to Durand, 14 Sept. 1893, encl. 3 in GI to SS, 27 Sept. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IB(viii), pp. 848-49.

Government of India was more interested in the settlement of the Pamir question, Abdur Rahman expressed greater interest in the Indo-Afghan frontier. He made no unnecessary fuss over Roshan and Shignan. Perhaps the demand of Captain Vannovsky, a Russian officer, for a passage through Roshan persuaded the Amir to believe that he could not keep those provinces without encountering Russian opposition. In the case of the Wakhan strip, however, he showed his reluctance to keep it, and if eventually he agreed to retain it under his suzerainty, he categorically refused to fortify it.<sup>152</sup> But he easily gave up his pretensions to suzerainty over the frontier tribes from Chitral to the Persian border, and was allowed in return to keep Asmar within his territories. So far as the northern frontier was concerned, Durand thus secured all that was necessary for the safety of Kashmir and its dependencies.

With the Amir agreeing to give up Roshan and Shignan a settlement about the Pamirs appeared to be well within sight. But the negotiations were in abeyance for some time owing mainly to the illness of Morier<sup>153</sup> and Giers, the Russian Foreign Secretary. By December 1893, however, Russia accepted the compromise offered by the British Foreign Office. In return for Roshan and Shignan she agreed to accept a line east of Lake Victoria to the Chinese frontier running along the neighbouring mountain crests and corresponding roughly to the latitude of Lake Victoria, leaving Bozai Gumbaz to the British sphere of influence.<sup>154</sup> Kimberley at once detected in it a basis for a settlement; Lansdowne could not but consider it "very promising."<sup>155</sup> It indeed proved to be so, and in the following fifteen months the details of the final agreement of March 1895 were worked out without much difficulty.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>152</sup> Durand's Report, 20 Dec. 1893, *ibid.*, pp. 1413-36; Sykes, P. *op. cit.*, pp. 212-13; Durand, H.M. *The Amir Abdur Rahman Khan* (London 1907), p. 15; Khan, S.M. (ed.) *The life of Abdur Rahman* (London 1900), Vol. II, p. 161.

<sup>153</sup> Morier died shortly afterwards on 16 Nov. 1893.

<sup>154</sup> SS to Viceroy, 20 Dec. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/XI(d), pp. 192-93; also *vide*, Rosebery to Staal, 22 Jan. 1894, FO 65/1484.

<sup>155</sup> Lansdowne to Kimberley, 27 Dec. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), pp. 192-93.

<sup>156</sup> Anon. *The Foreign policy of Lord Rosebery* (London 1901), pp. 59-60. For the Agreement of March 1895, Appendix III.

## CHAPTER VIII

### EPILOGUE

When Lord Lansdowne laid down his Viceregal office, a final agreement for the Pamir boundary was yet to be reached, and no decision had been finally taken upon the Chitral question. Yet, indeed, in all essential details the Kashmir policy of the Government of India had taken a concrete shape. Complete control over the internal administration of the state had been established, and Kashmir was reduced to the position of the other feudatory states of India. Lansdowne had refused to reinstate Pratap Singh to full powers, as his policy was not to relax British control over the Kashmir administration until the changes, which had been introduced in 1885 and clearly outlined by the end of his own administration, should show some definite prospect of permanence. He therefore left the question of the Maharaja's restoration for his successors to tackle, and as it turned out, both the Indian and the Home authorities took the same view of the Kashmir question as Lansdowne did. Pratap Singh of course continued to exert himself for more powers in the administration, and even proposed to Lord Elgin, Lansdowne's successor in the Viceroyalty, to dissolve the State Council and appoint a minister of his own choice to assist him in the administration.<sup>1</sup> But both Elgin and Fowler, the new Secretary of State for India, were unwilling to take any measure that might frustrate the scheme of reform introduced during the past few years. In fact, they agreed between themselves that there should be no immediate departure from Lansdowne's arrangement as regards the internal administration of Kashmir.<sup>2</sup>

Lord Curzon, too, took the same view of the case when Pratap Singh appealed to him in April 1902 for his restoration to full powers.<sup>3</sup> He thought, as Elgin had done before him,<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Elgin to Fowler, 23 Oct. 1894, Elgin Papers/12, pp. 97-100.

<sup>2</sup> Elgin to Fowler, 20 Nov. 1894, *ibid.*, pp. 114-16.

<sup>3</sup> Memo. of interview between Curzon and Pratap Singh, 25 April 1902, Curzon Papers/256.

<sup>4</sup> Elgin to Fowler, 23 Oct. 1894, Elgin Papers/12, pp. 97-100.

that the Maharaja was not yet strong enough to shoulder the entire responsibility of the Kashmir administration. Though not personally disinclined at first to consider the Maharaja's case, he was not willing to depart from the policy laid down by Lord Lansdowne. He agreed with Hamilton, the Secretary of State for India, that adequate guarantees ought to be obtained from Pratap Singh before any change should be made in his status. He therefore preferred to wait till he should receive a favourable report from Colvin, the Resident at Kashmir.<sup>5</sup> Colvin, however, was not favourably impressed by Pratap Singh, and Curzon therefore would perhaps have deferred the question of the Maharaja's restoration "for a long time, if not for ever."<sup>6</sup> But his hands were forced when, during his absence from India,<sup>7</sup> Lord Ampthill, the acting Viceroy, paid a visit to Kashmir and, as Curzon later alleged, practically committed the Government of India to Pratap's restoration. Of course, he did so on the conditions which the Maharaja himself had made at a private interview with Curzon at Peshawar in April 1902.<sup>8</sup> On that occasion Pratap had agreed to keep Amar Singh as the Prime Minister and to accept the British Resident as the arbiter in case of any difference between himself and his brother. He promised to run the administration on the advice of the Resident and to make no change in its form or standard.<sup>9</sup> Curzon was reluctantly obliged to give effect to Ampthill's promise,<sup>10</sup> but made it a point to retain in substance the kind of arrangement that Lansdowne had made. Indeed, it had been a conviction with him that

"we shall have to take guarantees for the continuance

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<sup>5</sup> Curzon to Hamilton, 30 April 1902, Curzon Papers/161, pp. 117-24. Hamilton to Curzon, 21 May 1902, *ibid.*, pp. 164-70, Curzon to Hamilton, 26 Oct. 1902, *ibid.*, pp. 387-94.

<sup>6</sup> Curzon to Hamilton, 12 Aug. 1903, Curzon Papers/162, p. 285.

<sup>7</sup> Lord Curzon went on leave to England on 30 April 1904 and resumed his office as Viceroy on 13 December 1904. Ronaldshay, the Earl of. *The Life of Lord Curzon*, (Lodon 1928), Vol. II, pp. 340 and 361.

<sup>8</sup> Curzon to Brodrick, 14 Dec. 1904, Curzon Papers/164, pp. 1-5.

<sup>9</sup> Memo. of Interview between Curzon and the Maharaja, 25 April 1902, Curzon Papers/256.

<sup>10</sup> Curzon to Brodrick, 14 December 1904, and 15 June 1905, Curzon Papers/164, pp. 1-5, 135-36.

of the present form and standards of administration in Kashmir, which are practically British.”<sup>11</sup>

As for the Pamir question, it practically hinged upon the arrangement about Roshan and Shignan, and as Kimberley had hoped,<sup>12</sup> the agreement reached in December 1893 proved indeed the basis of the final settlement of March 1895. The line east of Lake Victoria, having been accepted by Russia, the British Foreign Office proceeded cordially with the negotiations. In January 1894, Rosebery formally accepted the compromise agreed upon in the previous month,<sup>13</sup> but matters assumed a gloomy aspect when Russia tried to make a further bargain as regards the line east of Lake Victoria. By the December agreement of 1893 Russia had accepted a line which was to run from the east end of the lake along the neighbouring mountain crests till it reached the Chinese frontier, leaving Bozai Gumbaz within the British sphere of influence. This was reaffirmed by Rosebery in January 1894; but in the month of April, Staal, the Russian Ambassador in London, proposed a new line which, though leaving Bozai Gumbaz to the British sphere of influence, did not conform to the natural configuration of the country and included a large portion of the Little Pamir within the Russian sphere.<sup>14</sup> But Kimberley, now Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, considered it “wholly inadmissible”.<sup>15</sup> Fowler was thoroughly ‘disappointed’ with the Russian demeanour, and insisted that the line east of Lake Victoria must follow the natural configuration of the country.<sup>16</sup> Fortunately, Russia made no fuss about her new proposal. In July, Staal finally accepted the line as claimed by the British Foreign Office,<sup>17</sup> and this practically remained unchanged in the final agreement of March 1895.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Curzon to Hamilton, 30 April 1902, Curzon Papers/161, pp. 117-24.

<sup>12</sup> *Supra*, Chap. VII.

<sup>13</sup> Rosebery to Staal, 22 January 1894, FO 65/1484.

<sup>14</sup> FO to Howard, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, 5 April 1894, FO 65/1485.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, also Kimberley to Staal, 28 April 1894, *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> IO to FO, 25 April 1894, *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Kimberley to Howard, 11 July 1894, FO 65/1487.

<sup>18</sup> Appendix III.

By 1895, too, the final decision as to Chitral was taken. Kimberley, as we have seen, had deferred it till the result of the Pamir boundary negotiations should become known. He was not certain whether the military retention of Chitral would be necessary after the conclusion of the settlement with Russia about the northern frontiers.<sup>19</sup> But Lord Lansdowne, though not quite sure of the necessity of permanently retaining Chitral,<sup>20</sup> was fully alive to its strategic importance. While strengthening Gilgit, he had never overlooked the necessity of keeping Chitral under the absolute control of the Indian Government.<sup>21</sup> When, eventually, he decided to retain it, the situation upon the northern frontiers had considerably changed justifying his decision and that of the majority of his Council. So long as Hunza remained the trouble spot, Gilgit indeed was the defensive nucleus of the Kashmir frontiers. Of the two groups of passes leading directly into the Kashmir valley—the Dora and the Hunza groups—it was more important to have control over the latter, and these passes could be best defended from Gilgit. But with the complete subjugation of Hunza and Nagar, and their pacification by 1893,<sup>22</sup> the centre of political gravity upon the northern frontiers had shifted from Gilgit to Chitral.<sup>23</sup> The question of retaining or abandoning that country, therefore, became the moot point during Elgin's Viceroyalty. Elgin was in favour of retaining it, and even the Pamir agreement, he argued, did "not affect the necessity of holding Chitral, except in so far as it may be said to increase it, because it has brought the Russians nearer to the passes."<sup>24</sup> Whatever the differences of opinion over the question of the retention of Chitral both in India and England, the decision to retain it was certainly an absolute justification of Lansdowne's policy. If that policy was finally accomplished in 1895, it had been clearly outlined two years earlier. Indeed, in the history of the northern frontiers the events of these two years serve as an epilogue to our narrative.

<sup>19</sup> *Supra*, Chap. VII.

<sup>20</sup> Lansdowne to Kimberley, 12 April 1893, Lansdowne Papers/IX(e), p. 55.

<sup>21</sup> That is why he advocated the construction of a road from Peshawar to Chitral. *Supra*, Chap. VII.

<sup>22</sup> MINWF, July 1893, PSLEI/71, p. 293.

<sup>23</sup> Prideaux to Ardagh, 7 Sept. 1893, Lansdowne Papers/VIII(e), pp. 120-21.

<sup>24</sup> Elgin to Fowler, 24 April 1895, Elgin Papers/13, p. 67.

## RÉSUMÉ

The major aim of the present work has been to analyse how the State of Jammu and Kashmir was integrated with the rest of the Indian Empire during the Viceroyalties of Dufferin and Lansdowne without actually annexing the state. The change in Kashmir's status was dictated mainly by political considerations. But it also envisaged a scheme of economic, social, administrative and military reforms for the transformation of Kashmir into a modern state.

The responsibility for introducing that change devolved upon Lord Dufferin, but the policy that led to it was not his own. That policy had been discussed—even debated—since the creation of the Kashmir State in 1846, and was eventually decided upon in the last year of Ripon's Viceroyalty. The task before Dufferin was not easy, but he faced it boldly in spite of adverse criticisms in the Anglo-Indian Press. When, pursuant to Ripon's instructions, he appointed a Political Resident in the Kashmir State, and brought it in line with the other feudatory states of India, the measure was criticised as being a prelude to the ultimate annexation of the state.<sup>1</sup> Lord Randolph Churchill indeed desired that it should be so,<sup>2</sup> though the imposition of a British Resident upon the Kashmir Darbar was afterwards considered a violation of the treaty of Amritsar which was interpreted as having granted the state in independent possession to Gulab Singh.<sup>3</sup>

But the State of Kashmir was never really annexed to the Indian Empire,<sup>4</sup> nor could the appointment of a Political Resident be strictly construed as a violation of the treaty of Amritsar. What was done was in exercise of the rights of

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Editor, by A.W.H., 27 Sept. 1885, *The Statesman and Friend of India (Weekly)*, 3 Oct. 1885, pp. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Churchill to Dufferin, 16 Sept. 1885, Dufferin Papers/Reel 517, p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> Panikkar, K.M. *op.cit.*, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> During the period under review, annexation had actually ceased to be the policy of the British Indian Government. Dodwell, H. (ed.), *op. cit.*, vol. VI, p. 501.



British paramountcy ; indeed, judged in the context of the 1846 treaty and the discussions and events that followed it, British interference in Kashmir in 1885 seemed to have been a logical sequel to the growth of the Indian Empire. A state, avowedly created in British interest and maintained for the safety of the Indian Empire, could hardly be conceived of as belonging outside the Indian political system.<sup>5</sup>

Even then, the intended change could not be easily introduced. Of its two components, namely, the appointment of a Resident at Srinagar and the introduction of a series of reforms, Pratap Singh was reluctant to accept the first, although he partly agreed to the second. His reluctance to accept a Resident was of course ignored, but it became difficult to introduce the proposed reforms owing to Pratap's weakness as a ruler. His timidity became all the more glaring in the context of sharp factional conflicts at the Kashmir Darbar. The situation deteriorated still further owing to the unnecessary interference of the British Residents. As a matter of fact, in the face of the misgovernment of the Kashmir Darbar and the continuous advance of Russia towards the Indian borders, the need of the hour was a stable government in Kashmir. The essential prerequisites for such a government were a strong ruler, capable of controlling diverse elements at the Court, and a Resident who would look to the genuine interests of the state as well as of the Indian Government, rather than his personal influence and power.

Unfortunately, the State of Kashmir lacked both, with the result that in the next few years events marched in a confused, kaleidoscopic manner. Factional conflict reigned supreme at the Darbar. Pratap Singh, instead of attempting to control the rival groups, set one against the other. He was jealous of the influence of the Political Residents, and tried even to play off the Punjab authorities against the Government of India.

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<sup>5</sup> Admittedly, the state was made over to Gulab Singh in the hope that he would resist any attempt by a "Muhammadan power to establish an independent State on this side of the Indus", and also act as a "counterpoise against the power of a Sikh prince." GG to Secret Committee, 19 March 1846, SPLBI/XIII.

In their effort to exercise their personal influence over the Kashmir administration, the Residents backed the Court faction, opposed to Pratap Singh. The effect was that the search for a stable administration in Kashmir led nowhere. One Ministry came after another ; Residents came and went in quick succession ; reforms were tried but made slow progress ; in short, matters did not move in the right direction. In the midst of this disorder, Dufferin tried to be considerate to Pratap Singh. When the Maharaja removed the Lachman Dass Ministry toward the end of Dufferin's Viceroyalty, and Plowden, the British Resident, complained against Pratap's highhandedness, the Viceroy removed the Resident, and gave the Maharaja a final chance to justify his position as the head of the state.

Whether Dufferin himself was hopeful about Pratap as a ruler is doubtful, but he was disgusted with Plowden's high-handedness. At Whitehall, too, no one entertained any hope of Pratap's chances of success. But Cross believed that the time was not ripe for "any radical change" in the Kashmir administration. Pratap Singh was given a further trial, so that if it should become necessary thereafter to remove him, the Government of India might not be assailed for having acted in an arbitrary manner.<sup>6</sup>

The search for a Kashmir policy was complicated by affairs upon the northern frontiers of the state. Opinions agreed that it should be determined in the light of India's defence requirements to counteract any foreign encroachment upon the northern borders. To that end Kashmir's hold over its dependencies, hitherto rather weak, should be strengthened. Of the tribal states along the Kashmir frontiers, Hunza in particular proved to be a troublesome neighbour. Its leanings towards the Chinese Empire and hostile attitude towards the Kashmir Darbar led to a reconsideration of Dufferin's frontier policy ; though essentially a believer in Ripon's policy of non-interference with the tribal states, Dufferin was obliged to advocate an active policy along the northern frontiers. In

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<sup>6</sup> SS to GI, 12 Oct. 1888, and accompanying Minute, PSDI/14, pp.55(a)-60.

fact, he himself sent Algernon Durand to study the situation upon the northern borders of Kashmir and suggest some measure for their defence against any external attack. Durand recommended the re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency which had been set up by Lytton in 1878 and withdrawn by his successor three years later.

The result was that the Kashmir question, as it faced Lord Lansdowne when he succeeded Dufferin in the Indian Viceroyalty, boiled down to two major points : first, how long could Pratap Singh be tried in order to set up a stable administration in Kashmir, without which no policy whatever could be safely adopted for the reorganisation of that state ; and secondly, whether the re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency, which Durand had recommended, would be an adequate beginning to ensure the safety of the northern frontiers. Whether the treasonable correspondence attributed to Pratap Singh was genuine or not,—in fact, Lansdowne later admitted that it might even have been a case of deliberate forgery—in the Viceroy's opinion its discovery at least showed the unsatisfactory condition of affairs at the Kashmir Darbar. And when Pratap resigned in favour of a Council his weakness, and perhaps also his unwillingness, to shoulder the responsibility of governing the state became manifest. How far Nisbet was personally responsible for Pratap's resignation is not easy to judge. Lansdowne, however, was never very happy with the Resident, and his decision to set aside the Maharaja was taken not on Nisbet's recommendations exclusively, but upon an aggregate of events culminating in the Maharaja's renunciation of power. At any rate, in a temporary acceptance of that resignation Lansdowne saw an effective means of setting things right in Kashmir.

He therefore decided to set up a Council to run the administration of Kashmir under the direct supervision of the British Resident. Side by side, for the defence of the state and of the Indian Empire, he re-established the Gilgit Agency in 1889. The instruments were designed to have at once an adequate control over the internal administration and frontier relations of the Kashmir State. Evidently, the idea was not all Lansdowne's own. In setting aside Pratap Singh, and adopting

an active policy along the Kashmir frontiers he merely did what presumably Dufferin would have done in his position. As a matter of fact, Dufferin himself admitted that the supersession of Pratap Singh was "but the natural consequence of what happened during the course of my own Viceroyalty."<sup>7</sup> The re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency was likewise a measure which followed from a course of action that Dufferin had undertaken. Indeed, Lansdowne's Kashmir policy was in perfect continuity with that of his predecessor. During eight years of their administration the British policy in Kashmir saw both its application and climax. The framework of that policy had indeed been well accomplished ; what remained for its consummation was merely a question of time.

After Pratap's supersession the task before the Kashmir Council was to speed up the reform measures. The object was to modernise the Kashmir State and link it up with the rest of the Indian Empire. In the interest of imperial defence the reform of the Kashmir army was given priority. Since the Russo-Afghan collision at Panjdeh in March 1885 the question of Indian defence had received the active consideration of the Indian Government. A proposal was made and examined for reorganising the armies of the Indian States ; before Lord Dufferin had retired from India the scheme for that reorganisation had been well set on foot. The defence measures taken in Kashmir were a part of that scheme, and although initially a strain upon the Kashmir finances, they eventually turned out to be a solid gain for the state.

Side by side, other measures of reform were also taken in hand. The finances of the state were reorganised, and a check was imposed upon the extravagance of the Maharaja. A special officer was appointed for the land settlement of the state, and officers from British India were lent to develop and reorganise the administrative services. The census of Jammu and Kashmir was undertaken for the first time in connection with the general census of the Indian Empire. An attempt

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<sup>7</sup> Dufferin's speech at a banquet of the London Chamber of Commerce on 30 Oct. 1889, *Pioneer*, 21 Nov. 1889, p. 5.

was made to check corruption in the judiciary ; educational institutions were set up at Jammu and Srinagar ; the medical department was placed upon a satisfactory footing ; and even a mountain railway—in addition to a line between Jammu and Sialkot—was considered for facilitating communications between Kashmir and the Punjab. The scheme for a mountain railway did not of course materialise, and in certain cases the progress of reforms was slow, or even negligible. But on the whole some improvement was made in the conditions of the state; especially the communications between India and Kashmir were considerably improved. In any case, the plan for the future development of the state was clearly laid down ; the hurdle that however still remained was its financial weakness.<sup>8</sup>

In this task of reorganisation Pratap Singh did not participate at first. He complained to Lansdowne that his resignation had been obtained from him by undue pressure, and asked for his permission to withdraw it. Even an effort was made by the Indian Press on behalf of Pratap Singh to secure his reinstatement. Appeals were even made for his restoration to the House of Commons by William Digby of the Indian Political Agency in London, and by Charles Bradlaugh, a British M.P. But in political circles in London Digby and Bradlaugh could not obtain much support. Their agitation in favour of the Kashmir Maharaja was even rejected as paid propaganda.<sup>9</sup>

It was only after the defeat of Bradlaugh's motion that Pratap changed his attitude and began to cooperate with the new Council. Lansdowne, too, detected during his visit to Kashmir in 1891 that the Maharaja, though deposed, was nevertheless quite a power within the state. Even so, Pratap was considered incapable of undertaking the full responsibility for the administration of his state, and Lansdowne responded to his frequent appeals for reinstatement only by partially restoring him toward the close of 1891.

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<sup>8</sup> Elgin to Fowler, 23 Oct. and 12 Nov. 1894, Elgin Papers/12, pp. 97-100, 112-14.

<sup>9</sup> From the London Correspondent, *Bengalee*, 16 August 1890, p. 391 ; *Supra*, Chap. IV.

However, with the establishment of complete control over the affairs of the Darbar, the Kashmir problem was by no means entirely solved. The frontiers of the state were still a matter for concern. There was considerable uneasiness among the frontier tribes at the re-establishment of the Gilgit Agency. They apprehended that the British outpost was the prelude to the annexation of their territories. Hunza, as usual, was the main spot of trouble, and rumours of tribal combinations against the Gilgit Agency were rife. This offered an opportunity to the Afghan Amir to fish in troubled waters. And, while China still persevered in her pretensions to suzerainty over Hunza, Russia was not slow to take advantage of the situation upon the northern frontiers. Ever since the Anglo-Russian Agreement of July 1887 as regards the northern frontiers of Afghanistan she had been busy strengthening her position in Central Asia. Reports and rumours of her activities poured regularly into the Indian Foreign Office, but matters assumed a serious outlook when in August 1891 a Russian Colonel turned out a British officer, reconnoitring the Pamirs. Something clearly had to be done to establish British influence upon the Kashmir border, and to come to a definite understanding with Afghanistan, Russia and China as to their respective claims upon tribal regions along the northern frontiers. On this point the authorities at Whitehall and Simla were in complete agreement. In the early period of his administration Lansdowne was more concerned with a definite understanding with the Amir about the Indo-Afghan frontiers. A mission to Kabul was considered intermittently from 1890 onwards. But matters took a turn with the increasing activities of the Russians upon the Pamirs, and their insistence on the Afghan evacuation of the territories of Roshan and Shignan which the Amir had occupied in violation of the Agreement of 1873 relating to the northern frontiers of Afghanistan. The Pamir question was therefore given priority when Mortimer Durand was sent to Kabul for an agreement with the Amir. That certainly hinged upon a settlement as to Roshan and Shignan without which Russia was determined not to agree to a Pamir line from Lake Victoria to the Chinese frontier, as Britain had demanded it. Fortunately, the Amir readily agreed to give up Roshan and Shignan in return for concessions upon the Indo-Afghan frontier, whereupon Russia

sought no major concession as to the line east of Lake Victoria. Thereafter the Pamir settlement was quite within sight, and with it a solution of the Kashmir question.

Later events testified to the success of Lansdowne's policy. That success of course he richly deserved, although he owed it to a certain extent to his official superiors at Whitehall. At least on one occasion he badly vacillated with regard to the Amir's rights upon Roshan and Shignan, and even talked of war with Russia. But Whitehall advised caution, and Lansdowne had the wisdom to appreciate the exigencies of the situation. After all, as Lytton had rightly pointed out, both Afghanistan and Kashmir were "indivisible parts of a single imperial question",<sup>10</sup> a decision on which could only be taken by the joint efforts of the India and Foreign Offices in London.

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<sup>10</sup> GI to SS, 23 March 1877, PSLEI/13, pp. 235-47; *Supra*, Chap. I.

## APPENDIX I

### RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE TREATY BETWEEN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE STATE OF LAHORE

MARCH 9, 1846

- ART. 3. The Maharajah (of Lahore) cedes to the Honourable Company, in perpetual sovereignty, all his forts, territories and rights, in the Dooab, or country, hill and plain, situate between the Rivers Beas and Sutlej.
- ART. 4. The British Government having demanded from the Lahore State, as indemnification for the expenses of the war, in addition to the cession of territory described in Article 3, payment of one and a half crores of rupees ; and the Lahore Government being unable to pay the whole of this sum at this time, or to give security, satisfactory to the British Government, for its eventual payment ; the Maharajah cedes to the Honourable Company, in perpetual sovereignty, as equivalent for one crore of rupees, all his forts, territories, rights, and interests, in the Hill Countries, which are situate between the Rivers Beas and Indus, including the Provinces of Cashmere and Hazarah.
- ART. 12. In consideration of the services rendered by Rajah Golab Sing, of Jummoo, to the Lahore State, towards procuring the restoration of the relations of amity between the Lahore and British Governments, the Maharajah hereby agrees to recognise the independent sovereignty of Rajah Golab Sing, in such territories and districts in the Hills, as may be made over to the said Rajah Golab Sing by separate agreement between himself and the British Government, with the dependencies thereof, which may have been in the Rajah's possession since the time



of the late Maharajah Kurrak Sing; and the British Government, in consideration of the good conduct of Rajah Golab Sing, also agrees to recognise his independence in such territories, and to admit him to the privileges of a separate treaty with the British Government.

ART. 13. In the event of any dispute or difference arising between the Lahore State and Rajah Golab Sing, the same shall be referred to the arbitration of the British Government ; and by its decision the Maharajah engages to abide.

## APPENDIX II

### RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE TREATY OF AMRITSAR

MARCH 16, 1846

- ART. 1. The British Government transfers and makes over for ever, in independent possession, to Maharajah Golab Sing and the heirs male of his body, all the hilly or mountainous country, with its dependencies, situated to the eastward of the river Indus and westward of the river Ravee, including Chumba, and excluding Lahul, being part of the territories ceded to the British Government by the Lahore State, according to the Provisions of Article IV, of the Treaty of Lahore, dated 9th March 1846.
- ART. 3. In consideration of the transfer made to him and his heirs ... Maharajah Golab Sing will pay to the British Government the sum of seventy-five lakhs of Rupees ....
- ART. 4. The limits of the territories of Maharajah Golab Sing shall not be at any time changed without the concurrence of the British Government.
- ART. 5. Maharajah Golab Singh will refer to the arbitration of the British Government any disputes or questions that may arise between himself and the Government of Lahore or any other neighbouring State, and will abide by the decision of the British Government.
- ART. 6. Maharajah Golab Sing engages for himself and heirs to join, with the whole of his Military Force, the British troops, when employed within the hills, or in the territories adjoining his possessions.

- ART. 7. Maharaja Golab Singh engages never to take or retain in his service, any British subject, nor the subject of any European or American State, without the consent of the British Government.
- ART. 9. The British Government will give its aid to Maharajah Golab Sing in protecting his territories from external enemies.
- ART. 10. Maharajah Golab Sing acknowledges the supremacy of the British Government, and will in token of such supremacy present annually to the British Government one horse, twelve perfect shawl goats of approved breed (six male and six female), and three pairs of Cashmere shawls.

### APPENDIX III

#### RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND RUSSIA WITH REGARD TO THE SPHERES OF INFLUENCE OF THE TWO COUNTRIES IN THE REGION OF THE PAMIRS

London, March 11, 1895

The Earl of Kimberley to M. de Staal.

Foreign Office, March 11, 1895.

Your Excellency,

As a result of the negotiations which have taken place between our two Governments in regard to the spheres of influence of Great Britain and Russia in the country to the east of Lake Victoria (Zor Koul), the following points have been agreed upon between us:—

1. The spheres of influence of Great Britain and Russia to the east of Lake Victoria (Zor Koul) shall be divided by a line which, starting from a point on that lake near to its eastern extremity, shall follow the crests of the mountain range running somewhat to the south of the latitude of the lake as far as the Bendersk and Orta-Bel Passes.

2. From thence the line shall run along the same range while it remains to the south of the latitude of the said lake. On reaching that latitude it shall descend a spur of the range towards Kizil Rabat on the Aksu River, if that locality is found not to be north of the latitude of Lake Victoria, and from thence it shall be prolonged in an easterly direction so as to meet the Chinese frontier.

3. If it should be found that Kizil Rabat is situated to the north of the latitude of Lake Victoria, the line of demarcation shall be drawn to the nearest convenient point on the Aksu River south of that latitude, and from thence prolonged as aforesaid.

4. Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia engage to abstain from exercising any political influence or control, the former to the north, the latter to the south, of the above line of demarcation.

Sd/-Kimberley.

N.B. In his reply of the same date M. de Staal approved of the above agreement.

## GLOSSARY

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>chaubursee</i>     | Fourth anniversary, usually to celebrate the occasion of one's death                                                                                                                 |
| <i>chilki</i> (rupee) | Rupee (in circulation in Kashmir) equivalent to about two-thirds (ten annas) of the Indian rupee                                                                                     |
| <i>kharita</i>        | A bag, a purse, the envelope of a letter, the ornamental or silk covering of a letter, the letter itself, particularly one passing between an Indian prince and the Governor-General |
| <i>khillat</i>        | A dress, or robe, of honour                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>parwana</i>        | An order, a written precept or command, a letter from a man in power to a dependant                                                                                                  |
| <i>patwari</i>        | A revenue officer of a lower order, an assistant in the settlement department whose duty is to help in the work of survey                                                            |
| <i>ravangi</i>        | toll or duty on goods in transit (woollen goods in Kashmir)                                                                                                                          |
| <i>sadr adalat</i>    | The chief court of justice                                                                                                                                                           |
| <i>tahsil</i>         | Collection, especially of the public revenue derived from the land : the revenue collected ; loosely, the revenue jurisdiction of a subordinate Collector                            |
| <i>vakil</i>          | Advocate or representative                                                                                                                                                           |

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|         | C.1075      |                                                                                                                          |
| 1856    | (245)       | <i>Minute dated 28th Feb. 1856 reviewing Dalhousie's administration, 1848-56.</i>                                        |
| 1867-68 | 147(H.C.)   | <i>Appointment of a Commercial Agent at Ladakh.</i>                                                                      |
| 1871    | 60          | <i>Mission of Douglas Forsyth to Yarkand.</i>                                                                            |
| 1873    | C.699       | <i>Central Asia : Correspondence with Russia (1872-73) re : boundaries of Afghanistan.</i>                               |
|         | C.704       | <i>Central Asia: Correspondence, 1869-73.</i>                                                                            |
| 1874    | 217         | <i>Kashgar : Treaty of Commerce.</i>                                                                                     |
| 1878    | C.2164      | <i>Central Asia : Correspondence.</i>                                                                                    |
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|         | C.2250      | <i>Afghanistan — Further Papers.</i>                                                                                     |
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| Year    | Command No. | Description                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1878-79 | C.2402      | Despatch from SS, 7 August 1879.                                                                                                                                                 |
| 1881    | C.2844      | <i>Correspondence, 1879-81 re: Russia's military operations.</i>                                                                                                                 |
|         | C.3032      | <i>Occupation of Tekke Turcoman country by Russia.</i>                                                                                                                           |
| 1884    | C.3930      | <i>Central Asia: Correspondence, in continuation of C.3032.</i>                                                                                                                  |
| 1884-85 | C.4387      | <i>Further Correspondence:</i>                                                                                                                                                   |
|         | C.4389      | <i>Central Asia, Afghan</i>                                                                                                                                                      |
|         | C.4418      | <i>Boundary Commission, Panjdeh Affairs etc.</i>                                                                                                                                 |
| 1887    | C.5114      | <i>Central Asia, Further</i>                                                                                                                                                     |
|         | C.5235      | <i>Correspondence re : Afghan boundary and its future delimitation.</i>                                                                                                          |
| 1890    | C.6072      | <i>Kashmir: Papers relating to.</i>                                                                                                                                              |
| 1892    | C.6621      | <i>Hunza Expedition : Correspondence.</i>                                                                                                                                        |
| 1895    | (91)        | <i>Expenditure on Railways and Roads, and on Military Expeditions and explorations and Subsidies to Native Chiefs beyond the West and North-West Frontier of India, 1882-91.</i> |
|         | (117)       | <i>Expenditure incurred on Military Expeditions to Gilgit, Chilas, Hunza, 1890-91 and 1892-93.</i>                                                                               |
|         | C.7864      | <i>Chitral Correspondence.</i>                                                                                                                                                   |
| 1895    | C.7643      | <i>Pamirs : Agreement between Russia and Great Britain.</i>                                                                                                                      |

| Year | Command No. | Description                                                       |
|------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1896 | C.8037      | <i>Chitral Correspondence.</i>                                    |
| 1900 | (13)        | <i>Wars on or beyond the borders of British India since 1849.</i> |

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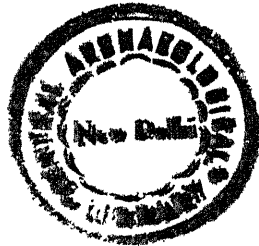
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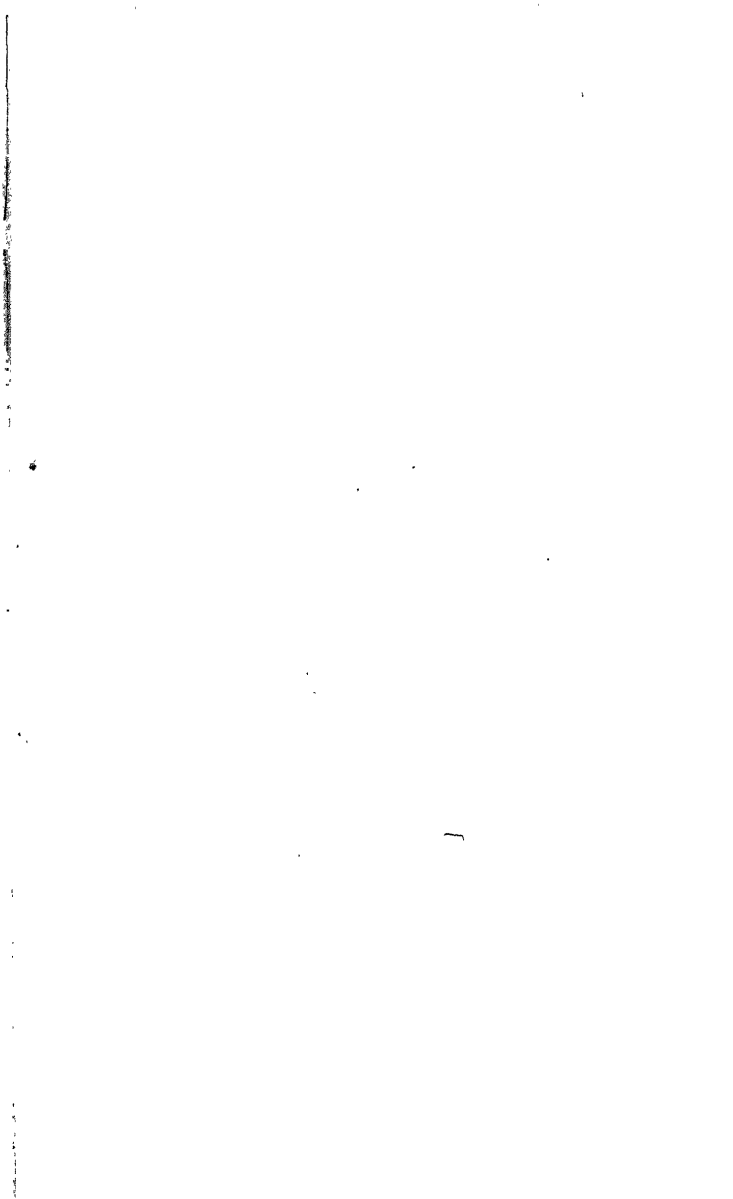
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